Testimony in Support of Kansas House Bill 2074  
House Committee on Federal and State Affairs  
February, 1, 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Kansas House Bill 2074 (HB2074), which would amend the Personal and Family Protection Act to permit public universities and colleges in Kansas to permanently opt out of the 2013 law authorizing concealed carry of firearms on their campuses. My name is Katy Jackman Tyndell, and I am the Wichita Local Group Lead of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. However, I offer this testimony in my personal capacity as a concerned Kansan, a licensed attorney, a wife, and a mother.

Kansas has a proud history of responsible gun ownership. My grandfather, a Wichita native, was an avid hunter and card-carrying member of the NRA, back when it stood for safety and sportsmanship. My dad carried on in his tradition and taught my siblings and me not only the significance of hunting culture, but also respect for the deadly weapons used in that sport and to always take extreme care in using and storing them safely. By pursuing a policy of allowing guns on college campuses, our lawmakers here in Kansas have done a great disservice to that proud history and have put the everyday safety of Kansans at risk in the process.

Campus carry is a reckless law, and the reasons to resist it are many. The vast majority of those most affected by the law strongly oppose it. A poll of over 20,000 Kansas Board of Regents employees found that 82 percent oppose allowing concealed handguns in campus buildings. Another 70 percent said the new policy would negatively impact courses, and two-thirds said it would inhibit educators’ ability to teach and engage with students. We are all familiar with the dangers of adding guns to an environment already fraught with immaturity, mental health issues, drugs, and alcohol, not to mention the fact that implementation comes at an outrageous expense. Guns on campus create new security and insurance costs for Kansas schools and universities already trying to navigate a severe budget shortfall.

While I agree with all of these reasons to reverse the campus carry law, I want to focus my testimony primarily on responding to the argument that campus carry is already legal and has been successful in a number of states. In the words of one individual, in particular, "the sky isn't falling in those states the way I would lead people to believe it is here in Kansas."

This may be true, but upon closer examination, the argument that campus carry is working in other states is misplaced. First of all, there are only nine states in which some form of campus carry is permitted. But, most importantly, all of those states have placed sensible regulations on who can carry a concealed firearm in the first place and/or where on campus guns are allowed. Kansas has done neither.

Seven states which allow concealed carry of firearms on campus, only allow them in some circumstances.* Idaho’s campus carry law, for example, does not apply to student dormitories or residence halls, nor does it apply to public entertainment or sporting facilities that have a seating capacity of more than 1,000 people. In Oregon, each school has the discretion to

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* Those seven states include Idaho, Minnesota, Missouri, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin
decide for itself whether to permit concealed handguns inside buildings, dormitories, event centers, and classrooms. Texas colleges and universities have the latitude to identify and isolate certain sensitive areas and buildings where concealed weapons are still prohibited.

Moreover, while Colorado and Utah both allow concealed carry permit holders to carry guns anywhere on campus, both states have extensive requirements for obtaining such a permit (as do most of the other campus carry states). For example, those seeking a concealed carry permit in Colorado must, amongst other things, undergo a complete background check, be mentally competent, not be the subject of a restraining order, and—perhaps most importantly—demonstrate competence with a handgun based upon their professional/career experience or by completing the requisite training. Similarly, in Utah, an individual seeking a concealed carry permit must undergo a thorough background check, prove their good character (i.e., not have a criminal record, history of domestic violence, etc.), and complete a firearms familiarity course.

These gun regulations are in stark contrast to what we have seen develop here in Kansas in recent years: a policy of guns anywhere, anytime, and for anyone. Under our permitless carry law, virtually anyone over the age of 21 and breathing can obtain a firearm, with no training or experience whatsoever. The legislature has regrettably done away with all reasonable restrictions on gun use here in Kansas. I urge the committee not to overlook the importance of this fact when it comes time to vote on HB 2074.

Allowing concealed firearms on college campuses without any preconditions is not only dangerous, it is unprecedented. I urge the members of the committee to protect the public safety interests of all Kansans and vote in favor of HB2074.

Respectfully submitted by:

Katy Jackman Tyndell
1109 N. Glenmoor CT
Wichita, KS 67206
katytyndell@gmail.com
316.201.6993

**As an aside, Utah state law also allows dormitory residents at institutions of higher education to request only roommates who are not licensed to carry a concealed firearm. Kansas’ current campus carry law contains no such exception.