

March 6, 2017

Leena Fry

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Dear Chairman John Barker and the members of the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs:

I OPPOSE House Bill HB2220.

We are fortunate here in Kansas to have several outstanding universities, as well as KU Med, which provides the very best care for many Kansans. A bill that strips universities from making policies regarding handguns puts all of that at risk. Students and teachers should feel safe in their classrooms. As I discovered from my own experience as a student at KU Law School, classrooms are places where people should feel free to express their viewpoints, debate issues, and discuss new ideas, without fear that they might be shot for expressing an unpopular opinion. This is how the best learning happens, when there is a free exchange of ideas. As a Teaching Assistant at the Law School, I sometimes had to give students constructive feedback which was difficult but important for them to hear. I did not have to worry that one of those students might be legally carrying a weapon when I spoke to them about improving their work. Faculty should feel empowered to use their judgment to assign appropriate grades and provide constructive feedback to students without fear that an unhappy student will retaliate using a gun. Hospitals--where life and death decisions are made and emotions run high--are not an appropriate place for handguns. Doctors should be empowered to have significant and candid discussions with their patients without fear that a patient or family member will have access to a gun. Furthermore, I personally know doctors who are seriously considering moving their practices away from Kansas if this bill becomes law. My sister, who is an accomplished oncologist practicing in Iowa, would like to return to her home in Kansas, but fears the effect of this bill. Kansas cannot afford to lose its talented physicians, nor can it afford to deter those who would otherwise like to practice here.. All of these environments will suffer tremendously if universities are not permitted to make policies regarding handguns. To protect the integrity of the educational process, to ensure the safety of patients and medical staff, I respectfully ask you to oppose this bill.

Thank you for your consideration,

Leena Fry