

From: Elizabeth E Graber [mailto:fegraber@kpc.alaska.edu]

Sent: Wednesday, March 05, 2014 3:14 PM

To: Sen. John Coghill

Subject: SB 176: Allowing Concealed Weapons in College Classrooms

March 3, 2014

Dear Senator Coghill,

I have been a classroom professor at the Kachemak Bay Campus of KPC/UAA for the past 32 years. I am dedicated to my profession, and I am good at what I do. I am writing to voice my concerns about the proposed bill to allow students to carry concealed weapons into Alaska's college classrooms. If it passes, that will mark the end of classroom teaching for me.

I will not teach, unarmed, in a classroom where I do not know if or when my students are packing loaded, lethal weapons. The concealed presence of guns would not make me feel safer; on the contrary, it would make me feel far less safe. It would also make it impossible for me to shoulder responsibility for the safety of those in my class. The effect would be quite the opposite, by putting "authority" in the hands of those carrying guns regardless of their maturity, stability, or current frame of mind.

I am not opposed to a person's right to bear arms. But to allow anyone who isn't documented as mentally ill or felonious to carry a loaded weapon on campus is ludicrous. How are we supposed to monitor who's "legally" packing a concealed weapon and who isn't? It obviously isn't difficult for anyone who wants a gun to get one. In addition, what's not to invite a typical hormone-driven fist fight to become a deadly shoot-out if the angry participants are carrying loaded weapons? Or what's to keep a disgruntled student empowered by the gun in his pocket from threatening my life or the lives of my students? I am a teacher. And I refuse to arm myself as protection against the students in my class who would choose to carry concealed guns.

Violence on college campuses is clearly a tragedy when it occurs, but it happens so rarely in the larger context of normal campus life that to literally invite anyone who thinks they'll somehow be "protected" in math or history class from a perceived threat that the laws of probability say will never occur is ludicrous.

I respectfully urge you to reconsider this proposed legislation. It would be a tragedy in itself for our university to lose dedicated professionals like me if this bill were enacted.

Thank you.

Elizabeth Graber

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