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Senator John Coghill
State Capitol Room 119
Juneau, AK 99801

My name is Matthew Kirby, and I am the West Coast Regional Director for the national grassroots organization Students for Concealed Carry. I'm from Louisiana, but I am currently a graduate student in La Mirada, California; and, for what it's worth, I'm a former Marine infantryman who has deployed both to Iraq and Afghanistan. I thank the committee for the opportunity to testify in favor of the present bill.

I wish to express my gratitude and to extend my support for SB 176, the passage of which would compel the University of Alaska to comply with Alaska state law regarding the constitutionally-protected right of citizens to keep and bear arms. It is my earnest desire, as well as that of the tens of thousands of members that comprise Students for Concealed Carry, to see the nation-wide adoption of legal provisions that protect the ability of ordinary citizens to defend themselves in any circumstances in which their lives may be threatened. It is an unfortunate fact that university campuses have historically been—and are in principle—vulnerable to attack by malicious individuals, the collective havoc wrought by such heinous crimes being utterly inestimable.

While no law can make certain the safety of citizens in every circumstance, the purpose of the law is not to realize the ideal, but, rather, to enact provisions codifying the just and prudent exercise of those rights guaranteed, first by our Creator, and second by our Constitution; and it is my firm opinion that SB 176 is indeed both a prudent and a morally necessary addition to Alaskan law.

With regard to the former—that is, the bill's practicality—SB 176 is consistent with the wide body of positive evidence that average citizens can be trusted to use their firearms responsibly in self-defense scenarios. A 1997 study by University of Maryland senior research scientist John Lott and University of Georgia professor David Mustard called "Crime, Deterrence, and Right-to-Carry Concealed Handguns," in the Journal of

Legal Studies, as well as studies by engineering statistician William Sturdevant, and various state agencies, have shown that concealed handgun license holders are five times less likely than non-license holders to commit violent crimes.

The bill is, in addition, consistent with the negative evidence; that is, the fact that of the 206 college and university campuses that allow students and faculty to carry concealed weapons, there has not been any discernible increase in incidents of violence as a result of such provisions. The state laws of both Utah and Colorado have for several years now explicitly allowed possessors of Concealed Handgun Permits to carry their firearms on public university campuses, yet the frequently hyperbolic prognostications of those in opposition to campus carry have utterly failed to materialize. Indeed, there exists little in the way of empirical data that support the prohibition of the concealed carrying of firearms on university campuses. Such prohibitions as currently being exercised by the University of Alaska Board of Regents, being devoid of an adequate foundation in the available data with regard to crime and the carrying of concealed firearms, are especially egregious in light of Alaskan's legal right to carry concealed firearms statewide with impunity.

On behalf of my fellow Americans in the state of Alaska, I, along with the over 40,000 members of Students for Concealed Carry, emphatically encourage the passage of SB 176. While its passage may be considered by some to be a small victory, if the bill has the privilege of effecting the preservation of even a single innocent life, it will have proven itself invaluable. Again, I want to thank you—the ladies and gentlemen of the committee—for your efforts and for your time.