

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Andrew J Mullins <ajmullins@uaa.alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 10:58 AM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** SB-174 Student Public Testimony

Senator McGuire,

Thank you for reading my testimony. I oppose SB-174 because it strips the University of Alaska Board of Regents of the ability to meaningfully manage potentially dangerous situations on campus and needlessly exposes students, faculty, staff, and visitors to increased risk. The introduction of concealed-carry into the university will also have a negative impact on recruitment, retention, and above all student learning and success. We need to draw Alaska's best and brightest to our local – not drive them away in fear for their safety in the classroom.

It was one of the proudest days of my life when I received my acceptance letter to the English Master of Arts program at the University of Alaska Anchorage—should SB-174 go into effect, I will be embarrassed to be a student of the University of Alaska system. The University does not want this (and has opposed this bill), faculty does not want this bill, and many students do not want this bill.

Please do not do this.

-Andrew Mullins, University of Alaska Anchorage

**Forrest Wolfe**

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**From:** Anna Bjartmarsdottir <asdottir@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 10:40 AM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** SB-174

I oppose SB-174 because it strips the University of Alaska Board of Regents of the ability to meaningfully manage potentially dangerous situations on campus and needlessly exposes students, faculty, staff, and visitors to increased risk. As a librarian at the University of Alaska, Consortium Library, sitting at the reference desk and interacting with many patrons each day, as well as interacting with a multitude of students in class each year, I can not see the benefit of this bill. The introduction of concealed-carry into the university will have a negative impact on recruitment, retention, and above all student learning and success. We need to draw Alaska's best and brightest to our local universities and not drive them away in fear for their safety in the classroom.

Regards,

Anna Bjartmarsdottir

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Brad Chadsey <weatherreport322@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 04, 2016 10:52 AM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Bill Wielechowski  
**Subject:** SB 174

I wanted to at least send a quick note off to my state politicians voicing my opposition to senate bill 174. More eloquent people than myself have made lengthy arguments. But I feel it my responsibility to tell the people who are elected to represent me, that I do not believe firearms have a place in our schools.

Brad Chadsey,  
Juneau Alaska

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Craig Dionne <cdionne@emich.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 10:46 AM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** opposition to SB-174

Hello,

I oppose SB-174 because it strips the University of Alaska Board of Regents of the ability to manage potentially dangerous situations on campus and needlessly exposes students, faculty, staff, and visitors to increased risk. The introduction of concealed-carry into the university will also have a negative impact on recruitment, retention, and above all student learning and success. We need to draw Alaska's best and brightest to our local universities and not drive them away in fear for their safety in the classroom

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Craig Dionne  
Professor of Literature  
Eastern Michigan University  
<http://www.emich.edu/english/faculty/facultypages/cdionne.php>

<http://www.literatibookstore.com/event/craig-dionne-posthuman-lear>

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Daniel Kline <afdtk@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 11:40 AM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** Opposition to SB-174

Dear Senator McGuire and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to register my strongest possible objection to SB-174.

First, the bill is unnecessary. Current University of Alaska regulation and Board of Regents policy adequately provides for the university to manage its facilities responsibly; protect faculty, staff, visitors, and especially students from further unnecessary risk from the unwarranted proliferation of firearms; and mitigates potentially violent situations from escalating in dorms, disciplinary hearings, faculty-student interactions, and other potentially difficult situations.

Second, weapons hamper real education. The approval of concealed-carry on campus will greatly hamper the ability of faculty to teach freely and for students to participate fully. Knowing that someone in class is legally carrying a concealed weapon – and in this case an unpermitted weapon with no requirement for training or psychological background checking – will hamper free speech, require faculty to refrain from potentially divisive issues, and diminish the considered and sometimes controversial inquiry required for a real education.

Third, the bill is outrageously expensive. As the University of Alaska system has reported, providing for the bill will initially require \$1.3M, approximately \$800K/yearly, and will likely increase the UA system's insurance bills. In a period where the legislature is considering a \$50M cut to the system budget, these additional expenses are unwarranted, unnecessary, and completely out of line with the system's institutional mission and the operations of the three primary campuses.

Fourth, the bill is unreasonable in its demands and unsure in its stated effects. As the bill reads – and as the sponsors indicate – the bill is designed to bring BOR policy and university regulation in line with Alaska state law and current constitutional interpretation. However, constitutionally protected rights have been consistently subject to reasonable and sensible limitations when their exercise puts lives at risk. Freedom of speech is tempered by the need not to incite violence and freedom of religion is limited by the need not to harm others. The recently determined right to bear arms ought not to outweigh other limiting factors, primarily the threat of accidental misuse or inadvertent discharge. No matter one's political predilection, the presence of firearms increases the risk of injury or death, and the evidence that untrained but well-meaning “good guys” can prevent the “bad guys” from mass violence is practically non-existent. Even well-trained professionals have difficulty making the best decisions in the chaos of a firefight or its immediate aftermath. We have all read about the tragedies that daily befall well-intentioned people who, despite their best efforts, make a single, tragic mistake that takes their own life or the life of someone close to them. The university classroom ought not be one of those spaces.

Finally, the bill does not increase student success. In an era of declining budgets and increasing pressure on the UA system and its faculty and staff to maximize their efforts and make data-driven decisions based upon the student success, there is no evidence that SB-174 will increase enrollments or assist students in achieving their educational goals more effectively or efficiently. In fact, I believe that many parents and students will be persuaded to take pursue their education out of state, and then many of those students will not return to Alaska to open businesses or work toward the betterment of the state. I doubt that many families will be persuaded to

send their students to a UA campus simply because weapons are allowed on campus. In other words, the bill is motivated by concerns external to the educational mission and will detract from it.

I urge you in the strongest possible way to keep current university regulation and BOR policy in place and allow the faculty, staff, and students of the University of Alaska to concentrate on learning rather than worrying about whether their fellows are carrying weapons.

As I have taught at the college level since 1987, SB-174 would needlessly harm my ability to do my job effectively.

The very presence of a gun in a classroom constitutes a harassing learning environment.

Respectfully,

Dan Kline  
University of Alaska Anchorage

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** David Stevenson <ddstev@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 2:54 PM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** SB-174

Dear Senator McGuire,

Costs of implementing SB 174 in the UA system are estimated at 1.3 million for year one and 800K annually thereafter.

Given that UA is likely facing a 50 million dollar budget cut, how can this cost be justified?

It's embarrassing.

Thanks for considering this angle.

David Stevenson

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David Stevenson

Director and Professor,  
University of Alaska Anchorage MFA Program  
<http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/cwla/>  
<http://www.facebook.com/daviddstevenson>  
<http://ddstevenson.blogspot.com/>

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Erin Harrington <erinfish@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 04, 2016 10:09 AM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Bill Wielechowski  
**Subject:** SB174—Respectfully Opposed

Senators—

Thank you for your service. I'd like to provide feedback on SB174, which currently resides in your committee.

As a gun-owning Alaskan, I oppose SB174.

I was raised shooting guns and hunting. I also was raised in a household where we all knew where to find the loaded shotguns and handguns intended for self-defense.

As I've aged and have learned more about rates of gun violence in the United States as compared to other countries, I've learned that all data supports the truth that guns cause gun violence. When and where a gun is available, a suffering, confused, angry, mentally ill or otherwise hurting people can reach for it when their conflict resolution skills break down. I no longer keep loaded weapons in my home, and know that all the evidence shows that a conflict is more likely to become a deadly conflict when people are armed.

As neuroscientists, behavioral development researchers, spiritual leaders, and others informed in these subjects can attest, young people—the majority of students at our universities in Alaska—lack emotional skills and life perspective that comes with age and brain development. The challenges that seem overwhelming or dire at 19 are very different from those we experience at 39 or 59 or 80.

The UA Regents and the professionals at the universities are the best positioned to assess the capacities and needs of students and professors with respect to safety. The legislature should not restrict their ability to put policies in place that serve those stakeholders.

I encourage you to hold SB174 in committee.

Thank you,  
Erin Harrington  
Kodiak



## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Erin K Shea <eshea2@alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 05, 2016 2:32 PM  
**To:** Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Bill Stoltze  
**Subject:** SB 174

Dear Senators,

As a professor, parent, and someone who has experienced a campus shooting, I am writing to express my disapproval for SB 174. I am currently a professor at UAA and I was a resident on the MIT campus during the Boston Marathon Bombing in 2013 and associated shooting of a campus police officer, which happened less than 200 meters from my home at the time. For those of you not familiar with the incident, the bombers obtained Officer Sean Collier's weapon and shot him multiple times. In this case the officer, who had a weapon, extensive training in how to use it, and every intention to use it in a protective manner, was the victim. I use this example, despite the many unlikely events that brought it about, to illustrate that even in the best of cases with the best of intentions, a weapon can be used for evil purposes.

There are many students in my classes that are responsible gun owners. However, there are some students in my classes who are mentally unstable and are also gun owners. It is these students, should they bring a weapon to campus, who concern me. The passage of SB 174, which has an honest objective, will ultimately result in a less safe campus community for the students, faculty, staff, and visitors of the UA system. I urge the committee to vote no on SB 174.

Erin

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Dr. Erin Shea  
Assistant Professor  
Dept. Geological Sciences  
University of Alaska, Anchorage  
3211 Providence Dr  
Anchorage, AK 99508  
[eshea2@alaska.edu](mailto:eshea2@alaska.edu)

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Ira James Allen <ia55@aub.edu.lb>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 2:03 PM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** re: SB-174

Dear Senator McGuire,

I am writing to you in support of students, faculty, and staff at the University of Alaska. As an educator myself, I am writing to urge you to oppose wholeheartedly the passage--indeed, the very intent--of SB-174. It may seem strange for me, an assistant professor at a university far from Alaska, to write to you. But I have a personal stake, as does everyone connected with higher education today.

On the one hand, my stake is that of all Americans connected with higher education: I want the people at our universities to be safe. Forcing guns into classrooms does not aid that goal.

On the other hand, my stake is somewhat more personal. Having spent significant time in Alaska on a couple different occasions, my wife and I have long considered seeking positions at UAA. She is a neuroscientist and clinical psychologist, and I am a social theorist and writing center director; we have both had the good fortune to contribute consistently to knowledge-production in our fields, as also to innovative classroom teaching and substantive development of our institutions. We could see ourselves continuing our careers at University of Alaska Anchorage, and feel that in such event we would be able to serve Alaskans well.

Like many other fine educators, we would not seek employment at University of Alaska if the State Legislature forced guns into the classrooms of the university.

Naturally, I don't expect you to give special weight to my experience. After all, I am not currently an Alaskan, and am moreover only one professor. I think, though, that the experience I am sharing with you now is one that many professors, students, and potential administrators and staff around the country are having.

For the sake of the University of Alaska, and for the sake of the state it serves, and for the safety and wellbeing of all UA community members, I urge you to do all that is in your power to block passage of SB-174. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,

Ira Allen, PhD

Director, Writing Center and Writing in the Disciplines Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Composition Department of English American University of Beirut

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Jackie Cason <jackiecason@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 11:42 AM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Mia Costello; Rep. Matt Claman  
**Subject:** SB-174

Dear Senator McGuire,

I am writing to ask you to oppose SB-174. I write as a citizen and as a faculty member at UAA. I know you care about the learning of young people and about the economic interests of our state. I've seen you speak to the youth working with AYEА more than once, and I've admired your leadership with PNWER. I also know you are not seeking re-election and are in a position to think broadly about the issue of guns on our college campuses.

First, keep in mind that the university communities have determined from within that they do not want guns on campus. There is strong consensus and the reasons are many. Primarily, we care about the safety of all, we don't want an environment infused with fear because fear is not conducive to learning, and we prefer the power of language and argument over the force of weapons in resolving differences. With our diverse student body, we intentionally engage different perspectives because we think that different perspectives spark critical questioning and critical thinking, even when the issues become heated. We had a multi-year grant from the Ford Foundation for our Engaging Controversy initiative, and many of our faculty have been trained to use discussion techniques effectively. The Ford Foundation funded the effort nationally because they were worried about ideological polarization and the campus fear of controversy to the point that faculty were avoiding many important issues and limiting academic freedom. Those very issues that lead to polarization and the breakdown of dialogue are the ones we need to address because they are the big questions people care about and that disciplined study can inform. We strive to discuss such issues within the boundaries of disciplinary expertise so that they contribute to learning goals. Let us be free to choose the rhetorical arts in our institutions over the coercive threat of possible violence.

We have not come to this consensus on our campus without rigorous debate. If you look at civil dialogue events on our campuses, I think they serve as evidence that we foster civic engagement and respect divergent views. In fact, our Cabin Fever debate event used a proposition in its final round several years ago to address this very issue, and after that an event at the Bear Tooth debated the merits of the 2nd amendment. Efforts to push this legislation through is coming from a minority perspective and pushed from a national organization, not a majority local constituency.

Second, to go against that consensus and force our campuses to allow guns openly carried, the legislature would be undermining the authority of those who lead programs and guide learning in classrooms. While we strive to empower students to take charge of their learning, we also need some authority in the classroom to uphold policies and apply criteria in judging performance. This legislation would send a clear message that regents, administrators, and faculty have no authority when it comes to safety policies.

Third, I have not seen compelling empirical evidence that having lots of armed people on a campus enhances safety, though I have seen lots of reports of accidents involving firearms. I even have a cousin who shot and killed his brother while they were teenagers while playing with a gun. My dissertation advisor was shot and killed by a disgruntled student who was failing to make adequate progress toward a degree. A board decided to revoke his enrollment status. My advisor abstained from that otherwise unanimous vote, yet he was the one killed. All this is anecdotal, but my point is that the evidence isn't compelling on either side. Have you stopped

to ask why we don't want to know more about gun violence by studying it empirically? Why we have handcuffed the CDC from putting it in their research agenda? I suspect that perhaps people who want to carry guns everywhere without limitation don't want to know. They want to be content with a "feeling" of safety as they carry. Until we know more, I ask you to default toward institutional self-determination.

Fourth, I am not as opposed to those carrying guns who are adequately trained and know how to behave in a crisis. I've taken a few first aid courses, one very extensive, but I wouldn't head up triage in the event of a natural disaster. I'd look to medical professionals to do that. Lots of untrained people running around with AEDs and using them on unconscious injured persons might cause more harm than good.

Finally, if my rhetorical arts and my argument are wanting and ineffective to this point, and if you plan to support the bill, I ask for two amendments:

First, open up the legislation to all limits. Allow open carry of firearms in the courthouse and in the halls of the legislature. Demonstrate that the presence of guns really does make you and others feel safer. The legislation would be more honest that way.

Second, require rigorous training for those who want a permit to carry a weapon on a campus. The difference between a police officer with a gun and my neighbor or student with a gun is the police academy where these individuals practice in stressful, crisis-oriented situations and where they have to make split-second reactive decisions that don't allow for cognitive processing.

If anyone has actually read my letter through, thank you for listening.

Please oppose SB-174.

Jackie Cason  
4107 Balchen Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99517

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Jessica La Belle <labelle042@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 12:34 PM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** SB-174 concerns

Dear Senator McGuire,

I am writing to you to express my opinions regarding SB-174. As a proud alumna of University of Alaska Anchorage and the daughter of a former police officer, I am deeply concerned about the introduction of firearms and concealed-carry onto campus. I believe this would not only create the potential for dangerous altercations between students, staff, and campus police, but with the resident wildlife as well. Students have had run-ins with moose on campus that would be significantly more deadly if firearms were involved.

Another point I would like to make is that I began attending UAA when I was 14 years old and earned college credits towards my degree while I was still in high school. This was a phenomenal opportunity for me, and I am grateful for it. This still continues today, and allows many gifted young Alaskans a jump start on their education and careers. The presence of guns in these same classrooms would be not only a danger but a serious detriment to learning.

I oppose SB-174 because it strips the University of Alaska of the ability to self-regulate, creates potentially dangerous situations on campus and needlessly exposes students, faculty, staff, and visitors to increased risk. I can tell you, having experienced being both a student and a teacher, that weapons in the classroom would create an atmosphere of fear, not safety, and in order to learn students must feel safe. Thank you for your time and opening this issue to public comment.

Sincerely,

Jessica La Belle  
Bachelor of Arts, English (2007), University of Alaska Anchorage

**Forrest Wolfe**

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**From:** JOYCE LIONARONS <lionarons@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 10:19 AM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** SB-174

Dear Senator McGuire,

I am Professor Emerita at Ursinus College in Pennsylvania. I oppose SB-174 because it strips the University of Alaska Board of Regents of the ability to meaningfully manage potentially dangerous situations on campus and needlessly exposes students, faculty, staff, and visitors to increased risk. The introduction of concealed-carry into the university will also have a negative impact on recruitment, retention, and above all student learning and success. You need to draw Alaska's best and brightest to your local universities and not drive them away in fear for their safety in the classroom. Although I am not an Alaskan resident, I am concerned that the spread of concealed-carry legislation will negatively impact higher education across the United States.

Sincerely,  
Joyce T. Lionarons

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** kevin maier <kevinkmaier@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 11:58 AM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Bill Wielechowski  
**Subject:** Written testimony on SB 174

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee Members,

As an avid hunter, a fishing guide who has carried a firearm for bear protection, a father of two boys who enjoy shooting sports, and owner of a dozen guns, I'm writing to voice my strong opposition to Senate Bill 174, "An Act relating to the regulation of firearms and knives by the University of Alaska."

Like many Alaskans, I find as many opportunities to get outside as I can; more often than not I find an excuse to pack my hunting license and a firearm appropriate to taking the game we might encounter. From ptarmigan to caribou and geese to moose, I love to hunt, and I take pride in feeding my family with wild protein.

As part of the family tradition, my eight year old earned his first rifle this winter, a gift from his grandfather of a beautiful CZ single-shot youth-model .22lr. I don't think you'll be surprised to learn that he earned it by demonstrating that he had fully assimilated safe firearm handling rules. To be sure, he already has a deep respect for his hunting tools. As he will earnestly explain to you, when we are not afield or at the range, all guns are kept unloaded, under lock and key, hidden from view. Safe firearm handling is a first principle of the hunter safety curriculum, and a first principle in our house. When he heard that the Alaska Senate was considering a bill that would encourage students to carry firearms, he was deeply confused. Why, he asked, would you need a gun at school?

It's an important question.

As so often happens when we listen to the news on the radio, I patiently explained as best as I could. I began by suggesting that sometimes people feel the need to carry guns for protection, sort of like when we are fishing remote salmon streams in the summer, and worry that brown bears might be interested in pushing us out of our fishing spots. He quickly noted that we don't really do that anymore, as we've transitioned from 12-gauges to pepper spray when we fish in brown bear country. Indeed, convinced by the peer review literature on the efficacy of pepper spray, I've increasingly been carrying canisters of bear spray instead of my trusty Mossberg 500. In fact, this past summer while guiding daily fly-out fly fishing trips on remote streams in Southeast Alaska, I can count on one hand the times I packed a firearm.

It is my firm conviction that guns are tools for hunting. In my family, hunting is an important tradition, and I've already laid the groundwork to pass this heritage down to my two children. Passing unnecessary legislation that will mobilize the anti-gun lobby—**especially when we should be addressing the very significant economic crisis in our state**—will only serve to hinder my efforts to pass on this tradition. I urge you to do the right thing and kill this bill in your committee.

Irrespective of the concessions and amendments negotiated with the Board of Regents, almost nobody who actually works on a UA campus thinks it's a good idea, as I'm sure you are hearing loud and clear from the testimony. My hunch is that the majority of the hunters in your constituencies will similarly find the posturing inherent in this bill as absurd as my eight year old son finds it. In short, from my perspective as

hunter, gun-owner, father, and most importantly voter in Juneau, you should drop these senseless bills and do the job we elected you to do: insuring a bright future for our state.

Sincerely,

Kevin Maier

Juneau AK

[kevinkmaier@gmail.com](mailto:kevinkmaier@gmail.com)

907-957-0357



## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Lora Vess <lora\_v@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 1:15 PM  
**To:** Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Bill Wielechowski  
**Subject:** Written Testimony SB 174

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee:

On Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, I provided oral testimony during the Senate Education Committee public hearing in opposition to Senate Bill 174, "An Act relating to the regulation of firearms and knives by the University of Alaska." This is an expansion of that testimony and a response to some issues raised by Committee members at that hearing.

My name is Dr. Lora Vess; I am a resident of Juneau. I am also an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Alaska Southeast. I am a faculty member strongly opposed to Senate Bill 174. I submit this as a reflection of my personal values and experiences rather than as a representative of UAS, but I know that many faculty, staff, and students share this position.

First, this is an *unfunded mandate* in a time of budgetary shortfalls. According to the *Idaho Statesman*, Idaho is looking at an additional cost of \$3.7 million for required metal detectors, employee training, and additional staff for five campuses after its campus carry law went into effect. *The Houston Chronicle* reported that the Texas law is estimated to [cost up to \\$47 million](#) over six years for the University of Houston and University of Texas systems to update security, build gun lockers, and prepare campus police.

On a personal level, I am not anti-gun ownership or use. I grew up in a small Virginia community and recognize their value for hunting and protection. I attended Virginia Tech for my undergraduate degree. I had friends and former professors who were on campus the day of the shootings and I worried anxiously until news of their safety emerged. I was also a resident advisor while at Virginia Tech and I lived and worked in West Ambler Johnston, in the actual dorm room where two people were killed. I have also been mugged, unarmed, at gunpoint. However, even in light of these experiences, I strongly believe that institutions of higher education are not the appropriate setting to wage a battle over rights to possess firearms. Many of my students are struggling to find their adult identity and develop a sense of self. This does not need to be complicated by adding another potentially *explosive* variable into their transition from adolescence to adulthood.

As a professor, I care deeply about my students and creating and protecting a safe learning environment. On the best of days on campus, my students are engaged, invigorated, and a joy to be around. However, they don't always have the best of days. Some of them are coping with **depression, anxiety, and drug and alcohol problems**. The National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism reports that about 4 out of 5 college students drink alcohol, with about half of those engaging in binge drinking. Almost every person providing testimony in opposition to SB 174 at the February 18<sup>th</sup> hearing referenced their grave concerns regarding the emotional and mental health of Alaskan university students and the correlated increase in risks were firearms to become more readily accessible. Some of those supporting the bill expressed the opinion that college students are adults and should be treated as such. However, the brains of adolescents are still developing (and continue to do so through one's early-to-mid twenties). Many adolescents and young adults do not have the **emotional maturity and psychological development** needed for responsible firearm use, especially in high-density settings. Young adults have high rates of depression and anxiety. Certain mental health problems – such as schizophrenia or bi-polar disorder – have early adult-onset and may emerge during the college years. As you are certainly aware, Alaska **suicide rates** are among the highest in the nation with suicide as the second leading cause of death for U.S. college students. Greater access to firearms will likely increase that rate and certainly not diminish it.

At the hearing, several citizens and committee members expressed concern about **sexual assault and rape** on campus. The Committee is right to be concerned: 1 in 5 women (and 1 in 16 men) are targets of attempted or completed sexual assault while they are college students. However, the vast majority of assaults are not taking place in dark corridors or in parking lots leaving night class. In 90 percent of reported cases, the victim knew her or his attacker. Moreover, 89 percent of assaults occur when the survivor is incapacitated due to alcohol. We have a serious problem with sexual assault and intimate partner violence in Alaska, but our solutions lie with greater education, respect for women, and preventative measures. Arming women on campus will not protect them from sexual violence, especially when it is equally likely that their assailants may be armed.

My concern is that the legislative response with this bill is not reflective of any systematic understanding of the roots of violence on university campuses. Instead, I am concerned that this bill is ideologically driven with a narrow conceptualization of freedom and liberty that has nothing to do the operations and needs of Alaska's universities, or of the safety of the thousands of students, faculty, staff, visitors, and minors who are on Alaskan campuses on any given day.

Supporters create hypothetical scenarios where an armed vigilante emerges as victorious in the face of danger, but they refuse to consider non-storybook endings to that fictional scenario. Even for those experienced gun owners, what experience do they have with mental illness, what knowledge do they have of campus security or the university of environment, what skill do they have in aiming for a gunman in a classroom of chaos or cafeteria full of visiting, confused, and screaming school children? How will they respond to parties fueled with alcohol acting in unpredictable ways with their own guns in hand? This bill presumes that those with concealed carry permits are trained and psychologically able to respond to active shooters in a calm, safe manner. If an active shooter situation arises on campus, I trust the police to respond to the situation. I am greatly concerned that with more firearms on campus, injuries and causality rates could quickly escalate as innocent people are caught in the crossfire.

I absolutely reject the newest version of the bill. These changes *do not* protect the vast majority of university employees, students, or visitors in classrooms, libraries, hallways, or offices.

This bill introduces unknown **dangers to university staff and faculty** (risks, I might add that legislators are protected from). Professors regularly teach difficult and sensitive topics that some students find challenging and are not always able to process in a calm manner. It is the job of a professor to evaluate students and this places them in a vulnerable position. I cannot think of a day where I did not cover a sensitive or controversial topic in the class. As a sociologist, I teach about and encourage critical thinking related to human behavior and society. In this role, my students learn about sexual harassment and violence. In my classrooms, I regularly “discipline” my students for a range of activities—from talking while others are speaking to playing on their phones. While I am not a therapist, I counsel students on practical educational advice such as developing good study habits and applying to graduate school applications—to more personal matters, such as coping with loss or experiences with sexism.

Will these sorts of activities be covered by law? Because these are the sorts of behaviors that I, and many other professors, regularly engage in as part of our jobs and because we care.

Certain members of the legislature seems to think there is no reason that universities should have the right to restrict or deny concealed carry on campuses. I find that absolutely baffling given the unique cultural and educational climate of the UA system as described in the breadth of testimony from those of us who work, teach, learn, and visit University of Alaska campuses on a regular basis.

I **strongly** urge the legislature to reject SB 174.

Respectfully,

Lora Vess, PhD

Juneau, Alaska

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Paola Banchero <paolabanchero@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 10:28 AM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** AK

Dear Hon. Sen. Lesil McGuire,

I have never spoken before the Assembly and rarely written to legislative representatives about issues of concern. This week, I find myself doing both. I testified on Saturday before the Anchorage Legislative Caucus. Today, I write you to implore you to vote against SB-174. I opposed this proposed legislation because it would imperil the lives of students, faculty, staff, and community members who visit campus (including children). The bill would remove the University of Alaska Board of Regents' ability to regulate firearms on campus and make potentially dangerous situations more lethal. I also think it would impact recruitment and retention of both students and faculty. My comments are not anti-gun. I come from a family of hunters and know the uses of a gun.

Thank you for your time and attention this is critical issue.

Regards,  
Paola Banchero  
UAA faculty member, Anchorage resident and mother  
2441 Glenwood Street  
Anchorage AK 99508

**Forrest Wolfe**

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**From:** Phillip Terry <phillipwterry@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 05, 2016 10:12 PM  
**Subject:** SB174- NO

As an Alaska resident, I'm writing to let you know I oppose SB 174.

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Phillip Terry

Thank you to the members of the Judiciary Committee for the opportunity to submit my testimony on Bill SB 174.

My name is Robert Bundy. I am a lawyer who has practiced law in Alaska since 1972. I have hunted, shot targets and owned firearms since I was a child. I served as District Attorney for the Second Judicial District, Chief Assistant District Attorney in Anchorage and United States Attorney for the District of Alaska. It is an understatement that I have had extensive experience with the aftermath of violent crimes involving firearms.

Right now I represent a young woman UAA student who was shot in the head and left for dead by an acquaintance last October. She met her assailant through friends at UAA. She did nothing to initiate, cause in any way, or create the situation that resulted in the violence against her (as if that really matters anyway).

Today, you have the power to determine the fate of SB 174, a bill that would force the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska to allow guns on campus.

Because of the help of a Good Samaritan and excellent medical care, my client survived and will make a full recovery minus her left eye. Despite often severe pain and disability (her jaw was wired shut for weeks), by dint of great courage and determination she was able to return to classes just 5 weeks after she was shot. But if there were guns allowed on campus she would not have made that brave decision as her post-traumatic stress would have been too great to allow her to return. Campuses should be a safe place for all students and faculty; if SB 174 is passed my client will not feel safe to attend classes and events at the University.

Every day in this country, 91 Americans are killed by gun violence and hundreds more are injured. And too many of these shootings are happening on our college campuses. Since 2013, there has been a staggering 170 school shootings – and this year alone, there have been 10 shootings on school grounds. With each of these shootings, the lives of the victims, survivors and their families and the college community at large is changed irrevocably.

If passed, Alaska would join the ranks of only two other states that force colleges to allow all permit holders to carry guns on campus. The reason that most states don't have these laws on the books is because it's a

dangerous policy. This is echoed by the very community responsible for maintaining public safety – University police chiefs – 89% of University police chiefs oppose policies that allow guns on campus. It is also echoed by the student community – seventy-nine percent of whom said that they would not feel safe if faculty, students or visitors were allowed to bring concealed guns on campus. My client is part of that 79%.

Law enforcement, our college administrators, and the student body all know far better than anyone that allowing guns on college campus won't make students safer. Adding guns on our college campuses – where there is often a mix of alcohol, drug use, and highly stressful situations – goes against common sense.

This dangerous bill would put our University students and staff at risk. It will increase students' and parents' worries about safety. I urge the committee to vote no on SB 174.

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Bobbie Allen <rallen005@rochester.rr.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 1:57 PM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** SB-174

"I oppose SB-174 because it strips the University of Alaska Board of Regents of the ability to meaningfully manage potentially dangerous situations on campus and needlessly exposes students, faculty, staff, and visitors to increased risk. The introduction of concealed-carry into the university will also have a negative impact on recruitment, retention, and above all student learning and success. We need to draw Alaska's best and brightest to our local universities and not drive them away in fear for their safety in the classroom."

Your consideration of this position is appreciated; the position of the University of Alaska affects students everywhere.

Thank you.  
Roberta Allen  
2 Acorn Lane  
Fairport, NY 14450



## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Ruth Terry <ruthdterry@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 04, 2016 7:10 PM  
**To:** Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Peter Micciche  
**Subject:** SB 174

Hello Senators,

I'm writing to let you know I am opposed to SB 174. I am a faculty member with the University of Alaska Anchorage, and the passage of this bill would directly affect me as well as colleagues and students who I care about.

I work in the UAA campus library, a building that is open to all. If you walk through our halls on any given day, you will see college students, K-12 students, children, and local community members. Because we are open to all, my colleagues and I regularly encounter people who are in distress or under the influence of drugs/alcohol, and these people act out accordingly. I hate to think how these encounters might escalate in severity if people are allowed to bring firearms into the building.

This bill would not make me feel safer; it would have the opposite effect. Please imagine how you would feel if members of the public could freely and legally enter your workplace with firearms. Regulating the possession of weapons in places such as university campuses and legislative buildings is simply common sense. The right to bear arms does not include the right to bear arms anywhere, anytime.

Thank you for your consideration of my position.

Sincerely,

Ruth D. Terry

Senate District H, Represented by Bill Wielechowski

March 4, 2016

Dear Senators,

I am writing in regards to SB 174 to allow guns on UA campuses. I strongly **oppose** this bill. Like, many university affiliates I sent this letter originally back in February, however, our voices (the voices of those who work in academia) have unfortunately not been heard. My opposition comes from years of research in my field of social psychology that scientifically shows a *causal* effect of the mere presence of guns on aggressive behavior, thoughts, and on violent norm formation. In addition, personally, as an academic committed to student learning and growth in safe environments I cannot support this bill. I am an assistant professor at the University of Alaska Southeast. I have been at UAS 2011, and came from the University of Kansas where I obtained my PhD in psychology. I outline my reasoning for my opposing below.

In my field of social psychology the phenomenon of the weapons effect has been studied and been well-documented for quite some time (original work by Berkowitz and LePage, 1967). The weapons effect is the idea that the mere presence of weapons (or knowledge that they are there) leads to increased aggressive behavior and thoughts. As noted, this is a well-documented effect, in which I urge you to consider. *As leaders and authority figures we should be using data to drive our ideas and arguments, not opinions.* There is data here and it states that allowing weapons will *not* increase safety, but instead it will do just the opposite—it will increase aggression especially for those who are already aroused. The mere presence of weapons does not only directly influence aggressive behavior and thoughts, but it creates a normative environment that condones violence (guns are automatically and implicitly associated with violence for Americans) and states that our campuses are a places in which you need to carry a gun—a place where you are not safe.

In addition, to the well-documented scientific research that states the mere presence weapons increase aggressiveness, I urge you to consider the environment to which this bill would be applied. A campus environment is a place where young adults (and often students under 18) are learning for the first time how to navigate life on their own and find their identities. Their boundaries of thought are being challenged, they often fail (and hard) for the first time, and importantly are under high levels of stress (again often for the first time). While typically, universities are safe places, it is the case that often students push the boundaries of respect and safety of their peers, faculty, and staff. Recently, I personally experienced an incident in which I was fearful of a student. This student had not encountered a course like mine before, and was overwhelmed with the workload. The student did not agree with much of content, and while doing extremely well in the class, the student became increasingly aggravated, erratic and ultimately aggressive with me and other students. To add a layer to this scenario the student deals with mental health issues. Unfortunately, while non-normative (i.e., the average student does not behave this

way), this happens regularly. I reported the situation to all the relevant sources, we worked together as best we could, and tried to get the student support (which was ultimately refused by the student). While many may think we can just expel students in these situations—it is not that easy. Often these situations are somewhat ambiguous. For example, perhaps given the students mental health issues they just did not understand the social situation or their behavior. Does it make sense to kick them out and deny them an education, etc.? The point is, giving access to guns does *not* increase safety, it makes situations like this even more dangerous. It creates an environment where this student is allowed to bring a gun to class, even if he or she does not plan on using it. But what happens on the day that the student is particularly aggravated? Note, that the experience I laid out above is an extreme one, however, what is more normative is for students to get quite angry about a grade, or style of teaching, or a conversation we have had in class. Allowing guns only allows these situations to potentially get out of hand.

A university is a place for growth and learning. *Importantly, it relies on a climate that fosters mutual respect and trust for its community members.* Please note that I am not against the right to own a gun. My husband and I in fact own guns and carry them when we hike and camp. This is about the environment that I work in. Guns are not allowed in government buildings because of potential threats, and these very reasons apply to universities. I urge you to seriously consider the scientific data that do not support this bill, and also importantly to listen to those of us that work and live in this educational space. We know what is best for our community—please let us make that decision.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amanda Sesko". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Amanda" being more prominent than the last name "Sesko".

Amanda K. Sesko, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor, Psychology  
University of Alaska Southeast  
11120 Glacier Hwy.  
Juneau AK, 99801  
Office: 216 Soboleff  
Email: aksesko@uas.alaska.edu  
Phone: 907-796-7636

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Seth Weaver <sweaver@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 04, 2016 2:10 PM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** SB174

Senator McGuire-

I am writing you today in opposition to SB174. I hope you can have a common sense of decency and see that this bill is misplaced in the culture of today. Not only would allowing students to carry a gun into a classroom cause undue harm to the learning environment, it would also invariably deal a blow to what higher education stands for: open and unfettered dialogue between peers. As both the product of ASD and UA alike, i fear that the passing of this bill would create such a 'brain drain' in Alaska that it could not ever recover. just look at Texas for this valid point. that state passed a smilier bill and has experienced some of the worst brain drain this nation has ever faced. please don't lead us in that direction.

I have called your office many times to express my regret for this bill and have looked for your opinion but to no avail. last time i called, a young man named Forest answered the phone and stated that you are in no way a sponsor of this bill, however through research i see that you are listed as a cosponsor. whichever the case, i testified before the senate judiciary committee on Tuesday to express my defeat for the bill.

if the senate must pass this bill, i would urge you to insert an amendment that allows the same provisions that are to be injected into the classroom to likewise be inserted into the state capitol: concealed carry. i see this as the only rational solution. the same reason why guns are not allowed into the state capitol is the same reason guns ought not be allowed in institutions of higher learning. this is why UA employs a police force and the capitol a force of its own. the underlying fear that will be sewn into the classroom with the bill would undeniably result in the inhibition to freely exert my first amendment: freedom of speech.

i beseech you to convenience your colleagues to lead this bill to defeat or with the amendment i have stated above. Lets be practical here. as a gun owner who indeed "checks his gun at the door" when entering a school, this only makes sense. I hope i can count on your support. your children will thank you.

Seth Weaver  
your constituent  
1010 Fairwood Dr.  
Anchorage, AK 99518

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Sharon Emmerichs <stmrx70@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 11:12 AM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** SB-174

I oppose SB-174 because it strips the University of Alaska Board of Regents of the ability to meaningfully manage potentially dangerous situations on campus and needlessly exposes students, faculty, staff, and visitors to increased risk. The introduction of concealed-carry into the university will also have a negative impact on recruitment, retention, and above all student learning and success. We need to draw Alaska's best and brightest to our local universities and not drive them away in fear for their safety in the classroom.

Additionally, I will say that as a new professor in Alaska, I have already had several moments in my classrooms where I feared for my safety and the safety of my students. I cannot say for certain that if a gun had been available in those situations that an agitated student might not have used it. I have been threatened verbally and through email by students who have mental health issues, and a student once threw a book at my head in a fit of temper. Please, please do not make it easier for them to reach for a gun rather than a book.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sharon Emmerichs

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Terence Reilly <tjreilly@alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 12:54 PM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Pete Kelly  
**Cc:** Terence Reilly  
**Subject:** SB-174

Dear Senators McGuire and Kelly,

My name is Terry Reilly and I'm a professor at UAF, where I have been teaching in the English department since 1996. I have been a teacher since 1975 (that's 41 years), both in Alaska and Florida. I have taught every level of student from terminally ill pre-kindergarteners to PhD students, and I've won teaching awards wherever I've taught.

I'm writing with some concerns about the passage of SB-174, especially with regard to allowing guns in classrooms. One of the courses I regularly teach is English 200X, a survey of World Literature, and I teach selections from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. When I teach literature from the Middle East, sometimes the discussions can become quite fiesty and animated, which I usually count as a good thing in an educational environment. It's good for students to be able to argue reasonably and effectively and to formulate and articulate complex ideas. My classes are regularly populated by soldiers and dependents from Eielson and Fort Wainwright, and some of the soldiers who were grads from West Point and the Air Force Academy have used my syllabus when they return to their service academies to teach.

Since 2003 or so, some problems have occasionally cropped up in class with servicemen who have recently returned from tours of duty in Iraq or Afghanistan. Some of these soldiers are having a hard time readjusting to life in the US after experiencing some of the things they have overseas. Some of these soldiers have been diagnosed as PTSD; other have not. Since 2003, I have occasionally had to dismiss my class because of the behavior of some of these soldiers. None of it has been serious--just yelling at other students or me, kicking over trash cans, slamming doors, or just talking endlessly about irrelevant topics--but some of these folks are really having some mental problems, and they aren't getting much treatment for them.

These soldiers are not allowed to carry weapons on base, but if SB-174 passes, they will be able to carry weapons in my classroom, and that's not good at all, either for me or the other students.

My brother just returned from 3 1/2 years in Afghanistan where he was a civilian contractor, and when I told him about this situation, he couldn't believe it. He said that there's no way those people should be allowed to handle guns anywhere, let alone a college classroom, and he pointed out the murder rate in Fort Collins Colorado since returning soldiers have been going there for debriefing.

One of my good friends and colleagues in Florida, Barry Grunow, was shot and killed the last day of middle school in 1990. He was a very popular teacher and the student who shot him was an honors student. The last day of school, the student who lived near the school brought some water balloons to the school and started throwing them. Barry told the kid to go home and start his summer vacation early. The kid walked home, got his father's (licensed) gun, came back to school, walked in the classroom, shot Grunow dead and then walked back home. Some people say that if Grunow had had a gun, he could have defended himself, but it doesn't happen that way--it's not the movies and it happens very quickly--randomly and without warning.

Anyway, I'm rather proud of what I've accomplished in my almost 20 years at UAF, especially bringing some of my former students back to Alaska as doctors, educators, legislators, engineers, tribal leaders, etc. If SB-174 passes and guns are allowed in my classrooms, I might be considering retirement a few years earlier than I anticipated.

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Terry Reilly  
Professor of English  
University of Alaska Fairbanks

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** Traci Pedersen <aktraci@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 10:40 AM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** SB-174

Dear Senator McGuire,

I am writing to voice my opposition of SB-174. My daughter attends UAA, so I feel very strongly about this issue. I do not want to see the Board of Regents stripped of the ability to meaningfully manage potentially dangerous situations on campus and expose students, faculty, staff, and visitors to increased risk. The introduction of concealed-carry into the university will also have a negative impact on recruitment, retention, and above all student learning and success. We need to draw Alaska's best and brightest to our local universities, not drive them away in fear for their safety in the classroom.

We must ask ourselves what kind of environment we want for our universities. The idea that more guns on campus will make us safer is absurd to me. Please oppose this bill.

Traci Pedersen  
Wasilla, AK  
907-355-1056



## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** travisrector . <travisrector@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 1:02 PM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** I am a UAA professor and I oppose SB-174

Senator McGuire,

I am a UAA professor and I am writing to tell you why I am opposed to concealed weapons on campus. My feelings aren't based upon an anti-gun stance but rather my experiences in the classroom. I teach physics classes that are difficult and stressful. Passing my classes is required by many who aspire to jobs in engineering and the sciences. But many of my students fail because physics is, frankly, hard. Scientists and engineers wouldn't paid what they are if it was easy.

This stress can boil over in the classroom. I have had students blame and yell at me because of their bad grades. I've had students despair that they would lose their scholarships if they didn't do better in my class. I once had a student get so angry his face turned beet red- and it was only because I didn't use the correct muzzle velocity for a .30-06 rifle in an example physics problem. That sure as hell got my attention! And even last week I had a student storm out of my class because he thought I was being unfair. My first thought was, of course, would he return with a gun?

You might think that having concealed weapons in a classroom might make my students and me safer but it's not true. All it does is make it easier for someone to get angry, and make a bad decision before they've had a chance to cool off and think about it. And someone who is so full of anger and despair that they would bring weapons on campus to kill will not be deterred by the presence of other concealed weapons. But seeing them on campus with weapons could give campus security and staff the time to react before it is too late.

We don't let people take guns into K-12 schools, airplanes, and legislative offices because we recognize these are not safe places for them. A college campus is the same.

Thank you for listening.

Regards,

Travis A. Rector  
Professor  
Physics & Astronomy  
University of Alaska Anchorage

## Forrest Wolfe

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**From:** zebadiah kraft <zeb\_kraft@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 02, 2016 11:36 AM  
**To:** Sen. Lesil McGuire  
**Subject:** Opposition to SB-174

I oppose SB-174 because it takes the University of Alaska Board of Regents ability to manage potentially dangerous situations on campus. Further, this bill needlessly exposes students, faculty, staff, and visitors like myself to increased and unnecessary risk to injury and death. The introduction of concealed-carry into the university will negatively impact recruitment, retention, and above all student learning and success. We have a duty to draw Alaska's best to our local universities, and allowing concealed carry (or open or any other kind) of firearms to classrooms will cost us students, faculty, staff, and respect. Our state has real concerns right now, and this bill is sadly among them.

I am a combat veteran myself, with 4 years as an Infantry team leader and two tours in hostile environments: one in Iraq in 2006-7, and one in Afghanistan in 2004-5. I have been witness to the violence and practical use of weapons my whole life, and in no place but a fever-dream is there a need for weapons in our schools. They will not protect those who fear mass shootings. All evidence points to the opposite, in fact, and the reality is that in a very real way we would be endangering our students (some of whom are minors trying to take university courses) and causing mental and physical distress in persons like myself. I have been a student at UAA since 2008, I have seen death at the hands of firearms, and I have no intention of witnessing such things again. Please do not be fooled by gun culture rhetoric. We need common sense approaches to gun safety and limitation of accidents and shootings, this bill is the polar opposite to that. You do not allow guns in legislative halls, the NRA does not allow them in meetings, and now we are supposed to allow them in classrooms where we debate and have structured argument? How does that make any sense?

Thank you for not passing a bill that will drive me and so many others from both Alaska's schools and from supporting your office.

Zebadiah Kraft