



Guns on Campus

- ❑ **Bottom Line:** In recent years, gun lobby-backed legislation that would force colleges and universities to allow guns on campus has been introduced across the country. Major stakeholders—from students to campus law enforcement to college presidents and school faculty—have voiced strong opposition to these bills. Statehouses should not override the public safety judgment of our colleges and universities, especially given the risk factors common to campus life, where young people live in close quarters and may make impulsive decisions.
- ❑ **The National Rifle Association (NRA) began its push to force colleges and universities to allow guns on campus following multiple high-profile campus shootings.**
 - **The NRA Model Bill:** In 2008, after a mass shooting at Virginia Tech that killed 32 people and a mass shooting at Northern Illinois University that killed 5 people, the NRA proposed, and the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) adopted, a model bill that would force colleges to allow guns on campus.¹ At the time, only one state in the country—Utah—forced colleges and universities to allow guns on campus.²
 - **The NRA Push to Force Colleges to Allow Guns on Campus:** In the year following ALEC's adoption of the NRA model bill, more than a dozen states introduced legislation that would limit colleges and universities' authority to set their own firearms policy. The push to force guns onto college campuses has accelerated ever since—with bills that would force colleges to allow guns on campus introduced in 18 states in 2015.³
 - **The Impact of Guns on Campus:** In 2014, in only the second week of class at Idaho State University following the state's guns on campus law, a professor's handgun accidentally discharged in his pocket during a chemistry lab, shooting him in the leg.⁴
- ❑ **The vast majority of states either prohibit guns on campus or else allow colleges to decide for themselves whether to allow guns on campus.**
 - **18 states and D.C. effectively prohibit the concealed carrying of guns on campus:** CA, DC, FL, GA, IL, LA, MA, MI, MO, NE, NV, NJ, NM, NY, NC, OH, OK, SC, WY⁵
 - **In 23 states, colleges set their own firearm policy. Across these states, almost every school has chosen not to allow guns on campus:** AL, AK, AZ, AR, CT, DE, HI, IN, IA, KS, KY, ME, MD, MT, ND, NH, PA, RI, SD, VT, VA, WA, WV⁶
 - **7 states require colleges to allow guns on campus in some circumstances:** ID, MN, MS, OR, TN, TX, WI⁷
 - **Only 2 states force colleges to allow all concealed carry permit holders to carry guns everywhere on campus:** CO, UT⁸
- ❑ **Campus stakeholders oppose guns on campus.**
 - **Campus Police Chiefs:** In a 2009 poll of university police chiefs, only 5 percent thought that allowing students to carry on campus would prevent any shootings. Meanwhile, 89 percent of the chiefs agreed that the most effective and important way to deal with gun use on campus is to prevent the use of guns at all.⁹
 - **College Presidents:** Two independent 2014 surveys of college presidents—one of over 400 and one of 800—found that 95 percent opposed concealed weapons on campus.¹⁰



- **College Faculty:** In a 2013 poll of faculty members at 15 colleges, 94 percent opposed concealed carry on campus.¹¹
- **College Students:** In a 2013 poll of students at 15 colleges, 79 percent said that they would not feel safe if concealed guns were allowed onto their campuses.¹²
- ❑ **Colleges and universities, which have traditionally prohibited guns on campus, are relatively safe from gun violence—but campus life is rife with other risk factors that make the presence of guns potentially dangerous.**
 - **Campuses are Relatively Safe:** Among all violent crime against college students from 1995 through 2002, 93 percent of incidents took place off campus.¹³ With over 21 million students attending colleges and universities in 2013,¹⁴ only 24 homicides occurred on campus.¹⁵
 - **Heavy Alcohol and Drug use:** Alcohol leads to impaired judgment about whether to shoot a gun, as well as impaired aim when firing.¹⁶ And a Columbia University study found that half of U.S. college students binge drink or abuse illegal or prescription drugs, and nearly 25 percent of college students suffer from substance abuse and dependence.¹⁷
 - **Gun Homicide:** In 2012, People aged 18 to 20 represented 4.2 percent of the total US population¹⁸ but committed 17 percent of all gun homicides.¹⁹
- ❑ **The gun lobby claims that guns on campus will protect students from sexual assault, but there is no evidence supporting these claims. In fact, the presence of a gun may compound the dangers associated with high rates of acquaintance rape on campuses.**
 - Students who own guns at college are more likely than other students to be threatened with a gun on campus.²⁰
 - Alcohol is involved in most campus sexual assault, and research shows that alcohol leads to impaired judgment about gun use.²¹
- ❑ **Guns on campus would burden colleges with large new costs for security and insurance.**
 - **Idaho’s campus carry law is costing universities dearly.** In 2014, Idaho passed legislation that forced colleges to allow people with “enhanced” permits to carry guns on campus. As a result, five state schools had to request more than \$3.7 million from the state to increase security in the first year alone.²²
 - **The cost of guns on campus in Arizona was estimated at over \$13 million.** During a 2012 legislative fight, the Board of Regents estimated that allowing guns on campus would cost \$13.3 million in one-time expenses and \$3.1 million in annual costs.²³ The bill was vetoed.
 - **Guns on campus legislation creates new insurance costs for colleges.** In 2011, the Houston Community College Board of Trustees estimated its insurance costs alone could rise as much as \$900,000 per year if a guns on campus bill passed.²⁴

¹ <http://www.nraila.org/legislation/federal-legislation/2008/alec-task-force-adopts-model-campus-pe.aspx?s=campus+personal+protection+act&st=&ps=>

² The Utah statute, codified at Utah Code Ann. § 53-5a-102, was enacted in 2004.

³ AR H1077, CO H1152/S32, FL H4005/S175, IN H1143, MT S143, NV A148, OK S718, OK H1143/S461, OK S557, OR H2348, OR H2527, SC S88, SD H1206, TN H320/S628, TX H805, TX H937/S11, VA H1369, VA H1411, WV, H2446, WY H114

⁴ <http://every.tw/188INou>

⁵ **California:** Cal Pen Code § 626.9(h) (2015 SB 707 removed the exception for concealed firearm permit holders at Cal Pen Code § 626.9(l)); **District of Columbia:** D.C. Code Ann. § 22-4502.01(b), (c); **Florida:** Fla. Stat. § 790.06(12); **Georgia:** Ga. Code Ann. § 16-11-127.1(b); **Illinois:** 720 Ill. Comp. Stat. 5/24-1(a)(4), (a)(9), (a)(10), (c)(1.5), (c)(4); **Louisiana:** La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§



40:1379.3(N)(11), 14:95.2, 14:95.6; **Massachusetts:** Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 269, § 10(j); **Michigan:** Michigan statutory law restricts carrying only in dorms and university buildings. Mich. Comp. Laws § 28.425o(1)(h). Schools have uniformly acted to ban guns elsewhere on campus, with the exception of Michigan State University, where guns are not prohibited beyond dorms and university buildings; **Missouri:** Mo. Rev. Stat. § 571.107.1(10); **Nebraska:** Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 69-2441(1)(a), 28-1204.04(1); **Nevada:** Nev. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§ 202.3673(3)(a), 202.265(1)(e); **New Jersey:** N.J. Stat. Ann. § 2C:39-5e; **New Mexico:** N.M. Stat. Ann. § 30-7-2.4(A); **New York:** N.Y. Penal Law §§ 265.01(3), 265.01-a; **North Carolina:** N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 14-269.2(b), (i). After passage of 2013 legislation, some faculty members who reside on campus are permitted to carry; **Ohio:** ORC Ann. § 2923.126(B)(5); **Oklahoma:** Oklahoma law bars permit holders from carrying on campus unless school policy provides to the contrary. 21 Okl. St. § 1277(D); **South Carolina:** S.C. Code Ann. § 16-23-420; **Tennessee:** Tenn. Code Ann. § 39-17-1309(b)(1), (c)(1); **Wyoming:** Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 6-8-104(t).

⁶ **Alabama:** University of South Alabama, "Student Handbook 2012-2013," available at <http://www.southalabama.edu/lowdown/pdf/lowdown.pdf>: "The possession or use of explosives, firearms, and or other dangerous weapons are prohibited"; **Alaska:** Regents' Policy and University Regulation, R02.09.020, available at <http://www.alaska.edu/bor/policy-regulations/>: "Loaded or unloaded firearms may not be carried or stored on university property"; **Arizona:** Arizona Board of Regents, A.A.C. § R7-4-102(3): Unauthorized use, possession or storage of any weapon, explosive device or fireworks on the university campus or at a university-sponsored activity; **Arkansas:** A.C.A. §§ 5-73-11, 5-73-306. A 2013 law allows faculty at Arkansas schools to carry concealed weapons, but allows schools to opt out of the law. Schools that opt out must do so on an annual basis. A.C.A. § 5-73-322; **Delaware:** 14 Del. C. § 9004(b)(6); **Connecticut:** Southern Connecticut State University, "2012 Uniform Campus Crime and Fire Safety Report," available at https://www.southernct.edu/universitypolice/uploads/textWidget/wysiwyg/documents/CleryReport_FINAL_WEB.pdf: "The University prohibits employees and students or their guests from possessing or storing firearms on campus"; **Delaware:** 14 Del. C. § 9004(b)(6); **Hawaii:** The University of Hawaii at Manoa, "Campus Annual Crime Report 2010," available at <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/housing/guide/reshallpolicies>: "The possession of illegal and dangerous weapons [including firearms] on University premises is strictly prohibited"; **Iowa:** Regulations written by the Regents Board, codified at 681 IAC § 9.1(2)(g), bars "use or possession on the campus or at or during any university-authorized function or event of firearms..."; **Indiana:** Indiana University, "Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct," available at <http://www.iu.edu/~code/code/responsibilities/personal/index.shtml>: "[P]ossession or display of any firearm on university property" is prohibited; **Kansas:** K.S.A. § 75-7c10(a)(11). A 2013 law (2013 Kan. ALS 105) allows permit holders to carry on campuses, but allows schools to opt out of those provisions. However, schools may freely opt out only for a maximum of four years, after which time opting out will only be possible if the schools set up rigorous security measures.; **Kentucky:** KRS § 237.115(1). Pursuant to a 2012 Kentucky Supreme Court decision, universities may not ban firearms in vehicles. *Mitchell v. University of Kentucky*, 366 S.W.3d 895 (Ky. 2012); **Maine:** 20-A M.R.S. § 10009; **Maryland:** University of Maryland, Policies and Procedures Section XI – 2.00(A)(1), available at <http://cf.umaryland.edu/umpolicies/usmpolicyInfo.cfm?polid=368>: "The University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) prohibits the carrying of guns, firearms, ammunition, other weapons, or replicas of weapons at the UMB campus"; **Montana:** The state constitution provides that the Board of Regents has "full power, responsibility, and authority to supervise, coordinate, manage and control" the school system. *Mont. Const., Art. X § 9*. Governor Steve Bullock and counsel for the state Legislative Services Division have both opined that this provision enables schools to regulate firearms, and prevents the legislature from limiting that authority; **New Hampshire:** University of New Hampshire Administrative Policies IIIJ, available at <http://www.usnh.edu/olpm/UNH/III.Admin/III.htm>: "The use and possession of all firearms...are prohibited on the Durham and Manchester core campuses of the University of New Hampshire"; **North Dakota:** North Dakota State University, Policy Manual, Section 706(4), available at <http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/706.pdf>: "Unauthorized possession or use of weapons on University owned or controlled property is prohibited, unless permission for possession and/or use has been granted by an appropriate University official"; **Pennsylvania:** Penn State Policy SY12, available at <http://guru.psu.edu/policies/sy12.html>: "The possession, carrying, or use of any weapon, ammunition, or explosive by any person is prohibited on all University property except by authorized law enforcement officers and other persons specifically authorized by the University"; **Rhode Island:** University of Rhode Island, "The University of Rhode Island 2012-2014 Student Handbook," available at http://www.uri.edu/judicial/assets/URI_Student_Handbook_2012-2014.pdf: "On-campus possession of firearms...is prohibited"; **South Dakota:** South Dakota Board of Regents Policy Manual, Student Conduct Code 3:4(2)(B)(19), available at http://www.sdbor.edu/policy/3-student_affairs/documents/3-4.pdf: "Illegal or unauthorized possession of firearms" is prohibited; **Vermont:** University of Vermont Policy V. 4.1.6.2, available at http://www.uvm.edu/policies/general_html/firearms.pdf: "The possession of firearms...is prohibited on UVM property and facilities"; **Virginia:** The state Supreme Court has ruled that public schools are authorized by state law to prohibit carrying on university property in buildings and at events. The court also ruled that university regulation of firearms is not prohibited by either the state or federal constitution. *DiGiacinto v. The Rector and Visitors of George Mason University*, 281 Va. 127 (Va. 2011). The state Attorney General has opined that state law also allows schools to regulate carrying generally by students and employees. 2006 Va. AG LEXIS 3; **Washington:** Pursuant to Rev. Code Wash. § 28B.20.130, Washington schools have written



regulations prohibiting firearms. See WAC §§ 106-120-027, 478-124-020.; **West Virginia:** W. Va. Code § 61-7-14 authorizes any entity that controls real property to prohibit carry.

⁷ In Idaho and Mississippi, only people with “enhanced” carry permits may carry guns on campus. **Idaho:** 2014 SB 1254; **Mississippi:** 2011 Miss. ALS 338, codified at Miss. Code Ann. §§ 45-9-101(13), 97-37-7(2). Colleges and universities in Oregon and Wisconsin must allow guns on campus but prohibit them in university buildings. **Oregon:** *Oregon Firearms Educational Foundation v. Board of Higher Education et al.*, 245 Ore. App. 713 (2011), Or. Rev. Stat. § 351.060; **Wisconsin:** Wis. Stat. §§ 943.13(1m)(c), (bm)(2)(am), Wis. Adm. Code UWS 18.10. In Texas, university presidents may establish reasonable rules regarding the carrying of concealed handguns by permit holders, as long as the rules don’t generally prohibit permit holders from carrying concealed handguns on the campus. **Texas:** Texas Gov’t Code § 411.2031(d-1). In Minnesota, colleges and universities must allow guns on campus but may prohibit students and employees from carrying on campus. **Minnesota:** Minn. Stat. § 624.714 Subd. 18. In Tennessee, colleges and universities must allow full-time employees to carry guns on the campus where they work. Colleges and universities are allowed to prohibit full-time employees from carrying guns in certain specified buildings and areas on campus. **Tennessee:** 2016 S.B. 2376, codified at §§ 39-17-1309 (11) – (13).

⁸ **Colorado:** *Students for Concealed Carry on Campus, LLC v. Regents of the Univ. of Colo.*, 2012 CO 17 (Co.); **Utah:** Utah Code Ann. §§ 53-5a-102(4), 53B-3-103;

⁹ Amy Thompson et al., “Reducing Firearm-Related Violence on College Campuses—Police Chiefs’ Perceptions and Practices,” *Journal of American College Health*, Vol. 58, November/December 2009, pp. 247-254, available at http://www.researchgate.net/publication/40446439_Reducing_firearm-related_violence_on_college_campuses-police_chiefs'_perceptions_and_practices/file/d912f5065428c10592.pdf

¹⁰ <http://www.indystar.com/story/behind-closed-doors/2014/06/05/guns-on-campus-study-college-presidents-say-no-thanks/9954729/>; http://www.dailycamera.com/cu-news/ci_25959554/study-majority-university-presidents-oppose-concealed-weapons-campus.

¹¹ Theodore Decker, “Professors against guns on campus,” *Columbus Dispatch*, January 20, 2013, available at <http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2013/01/20/professors-against-guns-on-campus.html>

¹² Ball State University, “Most college students don’t want guns on their campuses,” September 9, 2013, available at <http://cms.bsu.edu/news/articles/2013/9/students-say-no-to-concealed-weapons-on-campus>. See also poll of Missouri State University students, available at <http://www.news-leader.com/assets/pdf/DO109012522.PDF>.

¹³ American College Health Association, “Campus Violence White Paper,” February 2, 2005, available at <http://curry.virginia.edu/uploads/resourceLibrary/white-paper.pdf>

¹⁴ Estimated figure. National Center for Education Statistics, “Projections of Education Statistics to 2021,” Table 20, January 2013, available at http://nces.ed.gov/programs/projections/projections2021/tables/table_20.asp

¹⁵ U.S. Department of Education, Campus Safety and Security Data Analysis Cutting Tool, available at ope.ed.gov/security. Data include on-campus student housing facilities but do not include public property.

¹⁶ Charles Casey, *Futurity*, “Guns, Binge Drinking Go Hand-in-Hand,” June 17, 2011, available at <http://www.futurity.org/guns-binge-drinking-go-hand-in-hand/>

¹⁷ The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, “Wasting the Best and the Brightest: Substance Abuse at America’s Colleges and Universities,” March 2007, available at <http://www.casacolumbia.org/templates/PressReleases.aspx?articleid=477&zoneid=65>

¹⁸ US Census Bureau.

¹⁹ FBI Supplementary Homicide Report, 2012, and US Census population data, 2012.

²⁰ Id.

²¹ Id.

²² *Idaho Statesman*, Bill Dentzer, “2014 concealed weapons law costs colleges \$3.7 million,” February 3, 2015, available at <https://www.sdbor.edu/services/infogovrelations/documents/Idaho2014Law.pdf>.

²³ *Arizona Republic*, Anne Ryman, “Gun bill costly, universities say,” March 1, 2012, available at http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/USCP/PNI/Valley%20%20State/2012-03-01-pni0301met-guns-on-campus-costPNIBrd_ST_U.htm

²⁴ *Texas Tribune*, Christopher Smith Gonzalez, “Guns on Campus Could Cost Colleges,” April 27, 2011, available at <http://www.texastribune.org/2011/04/27/guns-on-campus-could-cost-colleges/>