

CALL ON YOUR MISSOURI REPRESENTATIVE AND SENATOR TO OPPOSE H.B. 1936
(A "GUNS EVERYWHERE" BILL)

HB 1936 -- CARRYING OF CONCEALED FIREARMS
SPONSOR: Taylor

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on General Laws by a vote of 8 to 4.

Bill summary written by Missouri Legislature:

This bill makes changes to the list of locations an individual can carry a concealed firearm within this state and the list of locations an individual with a concealed carry permit can carry a concealed firearm within the state. This bill also prohibits the state, political subdivisions, and public institutions of higher learning from imposing any policies or contractual requirements that would have the effect of prohibiting employees or students from the carrying of concealed firearms into locations where concealed carry is not otherwise prohibited by law. No changes have been made to the penalties for carrying a concealed firearm in locations prohibited under these sections.

Below are two letters sent to the Missouri General Laws Committee, which summarize how terrible this bill is. (Unfortunately, it is just one of many terrible gun bills being proposed in the Missouri legislature. I'm posting these letters at the request of several MOmentum members. The first letter is from Zuleyma Tang-Martinez, who chaired a committee at UMSL determining ways of responding to, and minimizing the chances of, a violent attack at UMSL.

February 25, 2018
To Members of the MO House General Laws Committee
RE: HB 1936 – Testimony Against

Dear Committee Members:

I am a Missouri citizen who taught for 38 years in the Biology Department at the University of Missouri St. Louis. I became a professor precisely because I love teaching and love interacting with students and watching them grow and develop intellectually. While I value my students, I would never have imagined that I would someday be asked to carry a gun to protect students from being massacred by someone with a gun. In fact, the idea of teachers and students (or anyone other than law enforcement officers) carrying guns on school campuses is completely antithetical to an environment conducive to learning, and to the vision of what universities are intended to be – centers of learning.

I speak, in part, from personal experience. Almost exactly one year before the massacre at Virginia Tech, I had a student who threatened others in my classes and who was known to be dangerous. The other students and I were terrified by this situation; UMSL police guarded the entrance to my lectures and even were present in the classroom during my final exam. I do not believe that either the students or I would have been any safer if we had had guns – the tension in the class was extremely high, we did not know if this student might have a gun, and pulling a gun on him could have been disastrous. Under HB 1936, this student would have had the right to carry a gun, which would only have put all of us in even greater danger.

In the years following this incident, I chaired a committee (under the auspices of the UMSL Senate), that was tasked with investigating ways of responding to, and minimizing the chances of, a violent attack at UMSL. After two years, and after consultation with the UMSL Counseling Center, Campus Police, legal authorities, and faculty and students, we made detailed recommendations to the campus, which have now been implemented. The option of faculty and students carrying guns was never considered a solution – in fact, we specifically felt that this would only increase the potential for violence – it would be an ignorant recipe for a major, catastrophic disaster!

Let me detail what sorts of scenarios might arise if faculty and/or students were to be armed and take it upon themselves to respond to a dangerous situation.

In the chaos that would ensue in any attack, the teacher/professor or student with a gun might have a difficult time identifying the shooter and could end up shooting the wrong persons. This is especially true if, in the midst of an unexpected shooting incident, multiple individuals pull out their guns and start shooting – how would anyone be sure who the “real” shooter is? How many “good guys” with a gun might end up dead because of the confusion?

Additionally, faculty and students would be at much greater danger of getting shot by law enforcement officers. In the middle of a shooting, first responders would not be able to determine which, of the several (many) people brandishing guns, is the real shooter and may kill one or more of the “good guys” before realizing that this person (persons) is allowed by HB 1936 to carry a gun.

A student or faculty member could accidentally leave their gun somewhere dangerous, for example, in a bathroom, to be found by others. This would create a serious safety issue and lead to a loss of life whether accidental or intentional. Surely, the members of this committee are well aware that such a scenario is certainly possible. Things (books, wallets, personal items) get left in bathrooms, library carrels, desks, etc. all the time. It would be no different with a gun – and while books, wallets, or house keys don’t pose a risk of death, guns do!

An armed teacher or student could overreact to what appears to be a dangerous situation, without first ascertaining the facts. I can provide one example, again from UMSL. A theater class, which happened to meet in the science building, was rehearsing for a play in which a fake gun is used. Science students and faculty, in the hallway outside the classroom, observed one of the actors brandishing a gun while other actors implored him not to shoot. The faculty and students immediately called campus police who responded and quickly (and safely) determined this was only a play, the gun was fake, and there was no real danger. Action was then taken to make sure such a situation would not happen again. An armed teacher or student might well have, in the heat and tension of the moment, caused a terrible tragedy by shooting and killing the student actor.

In summary, armed teachers/professors and students have no place on a college campus, or in any other school setting. Rather than making the schools safer, this would run the risk of precipitating an unwanted and unnecessary disaster. Frankly, as a seasoned teacher and professor of almost 4 decades, and as someone who chaired a committee to determine what happens during school shootings and the best ways to prevent such tragedies, I find it near insanity to think that allowing conceal carry guns will solve the problem. It will only aggravate and encourage such horrendous incidents.

No one knows more about school and campus safety than school administrators and law enforcement officials. Forcing schools to allow conceal carry, whether they think this is best or not, will only make the problem worse. HB 1936 is both an unwelcome and unwise overreach by legislators. HB 1936 is not only terribly misguided, but also will put all of us in much greater danger.

Although I have concentrated on schools and universities, because my expertise is in these settings, the same arguments can be made for all the other locations in which HB 1936 would mandate conceal carry – do legislators really think it is wise for everybody to be allowed to carry guns in places already infamous for tensions, altercations, and potentially drunk and irrational behavior, such as bars and casinos??

Sincerely yours,

Zuleyma Tang-Martinez, Ph.D.
Professor Emerita of Biology

Arlene Zarembka wrote the letter below, with the assistance of Michelle Zignago, on behalf of MOmentum, and e-mailed it to the chair of the General Laws Committee.

9378 Olive Blvd., #206
St. Louis, MO 63132
February 25, 2018
(314) 567-6355

Rep. Robert Cornejo, Chair
Missouri House General Laws Committee

Re: HB 1936

Dear Representative Cornejo:

I am writing on behalf of MOmentum: Missouri Moving Forward, a non-partisan Missouri citizen organization that has almost 400 members.

MOmentum strongly opposes H.B. 1936, which would 1) Require all public universities in Missouri to allow concealed carry of firearms (with no opt out allowed); and 2) Allow concealed carry of firearms in daycare centers and bars in Missouri and all public or private K-12 schools.

This is a recipe for the type of tragedy we just witnessed in Parkland, Florida.

First, a small handgun is no match for an assault rifle, which fires high-velocity bullets.

Second, HB 1936 would greatly raise the possibility of an intentional or accidental shooting on a college campus, at a daycare center, or at a grade school or high school, and especially at a bar (which, by definition, serves alcohol, which, in turn, inhibits judgment and accuracy).

Third, scientific research has established that, even in a healthy person, our brains are not fully developed until the mid- to late 20s. There are many students in state universities who have not reached their mid-20s and, therefore, are not fully mature. It is irresponsible to allow immature persons

to carry concealed weapon, which can be whipped out and used to maim or kill someone in a moment of anger.

Fourth, it is not a sound security practice to allow civilians to carry firearms in daycare centers, grade schools and high schools. The American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association oppose allowing guns in schools, as it would be a considerable threat to the public health of our children.

I urge you and the Committee to vote NO on HB 1936.

Sincerely,
Arlene Zarembka
Attorney at Law
Co-Founder, MOmentum:Missouri Moving Forward

SATURDAY, MARCH 24: 10:00 A.M.

MARCH FOR OUR LIVES:UNION STATION TO THE ARCH

MARCH FOR EFFECTIVE GUN CONTROL

Though prompted by the most recent school shooting at Stoneman Douglas, the March For Our Lives is about more than the lives of students. Rather, this movement is about all lives impacted by gun violence. This movement is for every life lost—in places of worship, workplaces, shopping malls, and in our neighborhoods. Everywhere and anywhere. Therefore, we are marching to demand “that a comprehensive and effective bill be immediately brought before Congress to address these gun issues.” On Saturday, March 24th at 10 a.m., St. Louis will have its march. All are welcome to join us, starting at Market Street, from Union Station to the Arch, to rally in solidarity with the victims of gun violence and to help bring an end to this epidemic that plagues our nation.

With more than two thousand people having already committed to attending, we are expecting thousands more in the streets. Planned Parenthood and Headcount have committed to tabling and Indivisible St. Louis will be providing voter registration. We hope to see you on March 24th!

Talk. March. Vote.

For more information, visit: tiny.cc/STLMarch or follow us on Instagram: @marchforourlivesstl and Twitter: @AMarch4STLLives.

PHONE #s of U.S. SENATORS AND REPS in St. Louis Metro area (including Illinois Side of Mississippi River)

U.S. SEN. ROY BLUNT: U.S. SEN. CLAIRE McCASKILL
(314) 725-4484 (St. Louis) 314-367-1364 (St. Louis)
202-224-5721 (D.C.) 202-224-6154 (D.C.)
Fax: (314) 727-3548

REP LACEY CLAY
Local: 314-383-5240
OR 314-367-1970

REP. ANN WAGNER
Ballwin office: 636-779-5449
D.C. office: 202-225-1621;

REP. BLAINE LUETKMEYER
Washington D.C. office (202) 225-2956.
Jefferson City office: (573) 635-7232
Washington, Mo. office: (636) 239-2276
Wentzville office: (636) 327-7055

ILLINOIS U.S. SENATORS
Richard Durbin:
Washington DC office (202) 224-2152
Local (618) 351-1122

Tammy Duckworth:
Washington DC Office (202) 224-2854
Local: (312) 886-3506

Illinois U.S. Representatives on East Side of Mississippi River
REP. MIKE BOST (IL 12) Washington, D.C. Office: (202) 225-5661
Alton, Belleville, & Granite City Offices: (618) 233-8026
Carbondale Office: (618) 457-5787

REP. RODNEY DAVIS (IL 13)
Washington, D.C. Office: (202) 225-2371
Decatur & Springfield Offices: (217) 791-6224
Maryville Office: (618) 205-8660
Normal Office: (309) 252-8834
Taylorville Office: (217) 824-5117

REP. JOHN SHIMKUS (IL 15)
Washington, D.C. Office: (202) 225-5271
Danville Office: (217) 446-0664
Effingham Office: (217) 347-7947
Harrisburg Office: (618) 252-8271
Maryville Office: (618) 288-7190

MISSOURI STATE LEGISLATORS:

To find the name and phone number of your Missouri State Senator or Representative in Jefferson City, open the following link: <https://www.house.mo.gov/>

MOmentum Affinity/Action Groups

Attention: Affinity/Action Group Chairs:

Please e-mail zarembka-politics@sbcglobal.net with the date/time/place of your next affinity group meeting -- at least a week before your meeting day, so that I can include it in a MOmentum e-mail.

Contact Information for Affinity/Action Group Chairs: The name and e-mail of the leader of each affinity/action group is listed below. E-mail the leader of the affinity/action group(s) you want to join. (If you want to form an affinity/action group that is not listed here, let us know.)

Health Care: Dan Lehocky lehocky@charter.net

Racial Justice: Mahina Nightage is reviving the Racial Justice Action Group. Those interested in participating in, the Racial Justice Action group should contact Mahina at m.nightsage@att.net,

Labor: Gretchen Arnold arnoldgw2@gmail.com

Trump Nominations Patty Wirth patty.wirth@sbcglobal.net

(This affinity group will be active when Trump makes another important nomination that requires Senate confirmation.)

Immigration and Refugees: Co-chairs: Linda Fried (lindafriedster@gmail.com) and Patavee Vanadolit (patavee1@yahoo.com)

LGBTQ: Laura Stefacek lstefacek@yahoo.com

Environment: Mahina Nightsage m.nightsage@att.net

Election Reform: Joey Wallach - michaelwallach@me.com

1st Amendment and Media: Claire Hyman (clairejhy@gmail.com)

Education: Susan Turk (susangturk@yahoo.com)

Science: Matt Austin (MattWAustin@yahoo.com) and Zuleyma Tang-Martinez (zuleymatang@sbcglobal.net and

Reproductive Rights: Hope Dodson (hopedodson@mail.com)

Economic Security: Arlene Zarembka (zarembka-politics@sbcglobal.net)

Do you have an action or event to include in a MOmentum email?

Please send an email to zarembka-politics@sbcglobal.net. Please include MOmentum in your subject line.

Provide the date, address, time and and a description of the action event --and with all the essential information that a person would need to know to take action. NOTE: If you wait until too close to the event to send me the action alert, it might not get included in the MOmentum alert.

The event must be non-partisan and align with MOmentum's goals to bring people together to promote democratic values.

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MOmentum is a non-partisan group of Missourians united in promoting democratic values. We are comprised entirely of volunteers, and we do not distribute or sell your personal information.

Our mailing address is:
9378 Olive Blvd # 206, St. Louis, MO 63132

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