

CAPITOL RESEARCH

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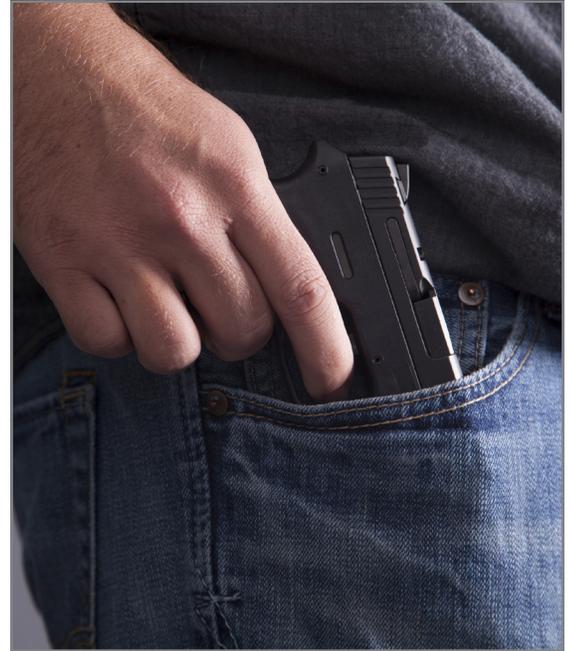
States Considering Gun Legislation for College Campuses

Spurred in part by recent mass shootings on school grounds, state policymakers and university officials have revisited the issue of concealed carry gun permits on college campuses in an attempt to make those campuses safer.

- Nineteen states introduced legislation for concealed carry on campuses in 2013, while 14 more followed suit in 2014.¹
- Texas became the eighth state to allow certain students to carry guns on campus with the signature of Gov. Greg Abbott in June 2015.² The campus carry part of the legislation will take effect Aug. 1, 2016.
- Other states that have adopted concealed campus carry legislation include Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Mississippi, Oregon, Utah and Wisconsin. To date, no significant firearm-related incidences in those states have occurred on public university campuses.
- A majority of states either prohibit the carrying of guns on campus (19 states) or leave the decision up to individual institutions (23 states).

The issue of guns on campus is a controversial one.

- Proponents of concealed campus carry legislation argue that allowing certain qualified individuals to carry firearms will prevent future mass shootings on campuses while ensuring constitutional protections for its students.³
- Proponents also argue that since concealed campus carry licenses are only available to certain individuals ages 21 and over, the total number of holders on campus will be relatively small.⁴
- Opponents of concealed campus carry legislation argue that campuses are already safer than other environments. Campuses have a homicide rate of about one death per 1 million students, compared to 57 deaths per 1 million in all other locales.⁵
- Opponents also argue that allowing college students to carry weapons on campus could lead to more alcohol-related shooting accidents and deaths. Nearly 600,000 students receive unintentional injuries while under the influence of alcohol



each year and nearly one-third of all firearms-related deaths in the United States are thought to have involved alcohol.⁶

- Proponents reiterate that carrying while intoxicated is prohibited by law.

For some of the states that have passed concealed campus carry legislation, schools have faced costs in upgrading campus security facilities.

- A common component of concealed carry laws for colleges and universities is the establishment of “gun-free zones” on campuses, such as residential halls, sporting venues and classrooms.
- Kansas’ concealed campus carry law provides that unless buildings have “adequate security measures,” the carrying of concealed weapons on Kansas’ public colleges and universities is allowed. Determining which university buildings fulfill the statutory requirement of safety is one difficulty facing campus officials.⁷





- The failure to include funding provisions in concealed campus carry bills has led to a general sense of fiscal uncertainty among university administrators. Five of Idaho’s public colleges and universities—Boise State University, Idaho State University, The College of Western Idaho and Northern Idaho College—are expecting costs of about \$3.7 million for security upgrades as a result of the law, which ranges from the hiring of security and safety officials to the purchasing of signs and metal detectors.⁸

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CONCEALED CAMPUS CARRY LAWS

