

Pro-concealed carry

Government



Concern is rife in the United States public schools over the rising insecurity. The public has been appalled by the senseless killings which have created a worrisome trend as more students become victims of violence perpetrated by their peers. Such senseless killings have led to the parents questioning the appropriateness of the security systems in the schools and the students wondering what dangers lurk in the unseen corners.

In the light of this insecurity, several measures have been proposed by the government and the school authorities to curb the rise in insecurity. Though it has received immense criticism from the various corners, the agitation for teachers and students to arm themselves in schools remains the best way to fend off future attacks. Students should be allowed to carry concealed weapons to school not only for their self protection purposes but because it is also their constitutional right as spelled out in the Second Amendment.

From the Austin Massacre in 1966 to the most recent University of Arkansas Shootings a few days ago, Americans have lost count of the number of the students and staff that have been felled by students' guns. All manner of task forces have been formed to probe such incidences and have come up with all manner of proposals regarding how such attacks can be put to rest. The feasibility of such proposals however remains to be seen as violence is yet to wane.

Instead of decreasing, such attacks have grown in numbers and the attackers have improved their tactics out-maneuvering and outsmarting the erected security measures. This sad situation prevails even after the National center for education vowed years ago to make US schools “ free of drugs and violence and the unauthorized presence of alcohol and offer a

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disciplined environment that is conducive to learning” (National Center for Educational Statistics, National Center for Educational Statistics, 1998, 3).

Various measures have been enacted and proposed including random searches on students but are yet to bear fruit. The impotent nature of these security measures prompted the formation of the Students for Concealed Carry on Campus (SCCC) to pursue the enactment of a legislation that seeks to allow students to carry concealed fire arms to school. Justifications for “Concealed Carry” Deterrence One major reason why concealed guns should be allowed into schools is for deterrence purposes. Immense research has been conducted on the effects of legalizing gun ownership on crime rates.

Most of these studies points to the affirmative and have been used by the pro gun groups to pursue for less strict legislations in the ownership of guns. Most states have permitted “concealed carry” in business premises in the belief that “employees/patrons with lawful concealed handguns enhance, rather than jeopardize the safety of a business.” (Fabian, 2003). The popular view held by such legislation is that a ban on firearms cultivates an atmosphere of danger rather than ensuring mutual safety.

A similar observation was reached by Lott (2002, 160) who observed that “allowing citizens without criminal records or histories of significant mental illness to carry concealed handguns deters violent crimes.” He further allayed fears of accidental injuries and deaths to the public by noting that concealed weapons “produce an extremely small and statistically insignificant change in accidental deaths” quashing any justification of their ban. The research conducted in a number of states indicated that “murder fell by about 8%, rapes by 5% and aggravated assaults fell by 7% (Lott 51).

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It is important to point out that these findings were arrived at after elaborate studies conducted in states that have decriminalized carrying of concealed fire arms. The analysis, conducted for a period of fifteen years, found that the number of rapes, homicides and violent robbery wend down significantly. The same scenario has been evidenced in the states that allow “ concealed carry” compared to the 5 states that do not allow them. Such a comparison presents a strong justification for allowing guns in schools.

According to the FBI Uniform Crime Reports (Cited in Concealed Carry : Facts & Statistics) “ states whose laws respect the citizen's right-to-carry guns for self defense the total violent crime is 13% lower, homicide is 3% lower, robbery is 26% lower and aggravated assault is 7% lower. ” The same logic of deterrence as being applied by the proponents of “ concealed carry” is in the belief that it is the only formidable remedy to the rise in school shootings.

Just like punitive rules and the prospects of stiff punishment goes a long way in addressing minor incidences of indiscipline, allowing “ concealed carry” of guns in schools will truncate incidences of gun attacks. The University of Utah allowed the carrying of concealed guns into classrooms to licensed individuals. It is too early however to pinpoint any major changes on crime prevalence but hope is rife that this will deter any impending incidences of gun attacks in the university. In the late 1980s, the state of Florida enacted a legislation that by then was considered controversial allowing concealed carrying of firearms.

By then, a conservative wing of the public was against the move seeing it as going against the conventional wisdom as was largely believed by them. The

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raging fear was that by allowing “concealed carry” the state of Florida was literally allowing bloodbath. Years down the line, crime rates went down and other states followed suite. Concealed weapons before the state of Florida had maintained a ban on concealed carry and those that did so had elaborate systems that gave the authorizing officials discretionary to the extent that most of the application went unapproved.

Things changed however after activists presented a strong case for the need to arm peace loving citizens for self defense purposes. (Haskins, 2006). Increase in legislations of decriminalizing concealed carry across the states has been having a resultant effect of reducing the rates of crimes nation wide, indeed credible figures have it that “for each additional year that a concealed handgun law is in effect the murder rate declines by 3%, rape by 2% and robberies by more than 2%. (Concealed Carry: Facts & Statistics) Similarly a replication of this can go along way to address the worrisome trend in schools. A look at the schools in the United States in the light of the raging school violence attests to the fact that gang attack can occur anywhere within the precincts of the school compound. Such attacks can happen in the residential halls like in the case of Virginia Tech Massacres of 2007, in the hallway like in the Red Lake High School or in the library as witnessed in the Columbine High School killing spree where 13 students and a teacher lost their lives and scores injured.

It is only prudent be armed and be on the look out lest they fall victims to the vicious gun attacks. Self Defense Apart from the minor elements that to savage attack and slaughter of their schoolmates, most students are peace loving and would not be quick to use the gun apart for their own self

protection. The existing literature on “concealed carry” for self defense has widely given hypothetical scenarios of how civilians carrying concealed weapons could have deterred further attacks by gun men.

One most cited incident dates back to the Texas gun attacks where one lay Suzanne Gratia Huff watched helplessly as her parents and other restaurant patrons were killed yet she “would have shot the killer and saved many lives.” However in line with the existing premises policy she was not “allowed to bring a gun into the restaurant” (Wilson, 2006, 66) Although incidences like these may be rare, they present a perfect example of how allowing “concealed carry’s” in school would go a long way not only in deterrence but also for the self protection of the students. Constitutional Right

Although ensuring the safety of the citizenry is the prime duty of a government, it is important to point out that it is also within the constitution to allow responsible and licensed citizens to possess and carry guns. Curbing of school violence aside the issue of bearing arms has always sparked a national controversy between the liberals and those that advocate for tighter laws on gun control. All are in agreement that it is a tricky business striking a balance between the right of the Americans to carry arms and the responsibility of the government to enforce security and maintain order nationally.

Past polls conducted on the issue of gun ownership across America indicates that majority favor carrying of fire arms. Such results are a pointer to how deeply the culture of gun carrying has been entrenched and effectively perpetuated across the ages. The prominence of guns is undeniable in

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America and incidences of its glorification are common in the popular media. They reflect an issue that has always remained thorny in the national politics. Indeed the constitution safeguards the right of individuals to possess guns.

The general feeling is that the second amendment “ was intended to guarantee the rights of individuals to possess fire arms, not only for militia use (as has been argued by critics) but also for self defense and protection from government tyranny. ” (Finkerman, 2006, 721) In the Parker v District of Columbia, the Supreme Court ruled that the Fire Arms Control Regulations Act of 1975 was a violation of the constitution. It is probably in recognition of this that 39 states in America have approved laws on “ concealed carry” although some still have left issuing authorities with huge discretionary powers in regard to issuance of fire arms.

Many of these states apart from Vermont and Alaska require the issuance of permits prior to possession of a fire arm. The importance of this background information on the possession of fire arms to the citizens of the United States is to indicate the centrality of the right to own a firearm to the pursuit of individual liberties. It recognizes the importance of firearms to individuals regardless of the motivations behind such a possession; be it self protection or hunting, as long as the carrying such a fire arm is not driven by ill motives.

Just as the government does not impede on the rights of the citizens to own and carry guns, the same right should be extended to students in campus in the recognition of the various dangers they face as has been exhibited by the increasing incidences of violence. It is crucial to point out that the <https://assignbuster.com/pro-concealed-carry/>

advocacy for “concealed carry” to school campuses does not extend to the underage but rather to those that are above the majority age as outlined by the law. Criticism of “Concealed Carry” As has been aforementioned, the issue of concealed carry to school has been faced with huge controversies.

Not everyone recognizes the outlined benefits of “concealed carry.” Some opposing arguments have centered on the improvement of the existing security measures. An example has been given of Israel where learning institutions are manned by armed guards. It is indeed important to point out that increasing the surveillance of schools by armed guards can go along way in fending future attacks; however such an argument fails to recognize incidences in school attacks where lone gunmen have been able to outmaneuver school guards, fatally wounding the only person the school was relying on for protection.

In addition to armed guards and additional surveillance, allowing concealed carry would play a huge role in deterring future attacks as well as ensuring self protection in case the existing security measure prove to be inefficient. Further criticism of “concealed carry” is based on the argument that increasing the number of guns in school will lead to accidental deaths as well as a situation where petty rows are settled through guns rather than fists.

The existing research on the issue however has failed to point out, as aforementioned, any significance increase in accidental deaths as a result of allowing “concealed carry.” Instead it has pointed towards decreased incidences of crime and more guarantees to personal security. Laws on concealed carry have been passed by a majority of states with significant success; the same hence should be replicated in the campuses. Again,
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looking at the number of accidental deaths reveals they are insignificant compared to the incidences of crime decrease.

A look at Florida also puts into disrepute claims that increasing guns in schools will lead to more deaths through gun fights. According to the Florida Dept. of State (Cited in Concealed Carry : Facts & Statistics) “ Since the carry law went into effect in 1987, less than 0. 02% of Florida carry permits have been revoked because of gun crimes committed by license holders. ” This is an indication that the argument on increasing crime due to increase in licensed guns in schools is an unfounded myth.