



HB1311 Hearing

January 27, 2021 – 3 p.m. – House Judiciary Committee

Jane Vangsness Frisch, Ph.D.

Vice President for Student Affairs

Chair Klemin and Committee Members: my name is Dr. Jane Vangsness Frisch, and I serve as the Vice President for Student Affairs at the ND State College of Science.

I am here today in opposition of HB 1311. As an individual who recognizes and values the need and desire to be armed; I also come to know that there is a time and appropriate place for this.

As the founding coach for our NDSCS clay target team and an avid hunter – I appreciate that at NDSCS we recognize there is a time and place in which firearms are appropriate. We enable students to safely secure and store their weapons through our College police department. This allows students to continue hobbies, such as trap shooting and hunting, while living and learning at NDSCS. This is a service that is important to our students and allows for monitoring and safety.

It is our perspective that expanding the ability to carry a concealed weapon into our living and learning spaces would decrease the safety and security of our students, employees, and visitors at NDSCS.

Introducing the possibility of concealed firearms into a learning environment is risky for various reasons. College is a time for growth and development when students' dreams, aspirations, failures, and emotions all crowd together in one location (the campus) and are present in every building. Our faculty and staff members work to foster growth and development among our students – which sometimes results in difficult and/or disappointing conversations. These tough conversations could shift to feared conversations - where employees will have another layer of concern: *will this disappointed, angry, suicidal and/or depressed student use their concealed firearm to harm me and/or themselves?*

Perhaps, more concerning, is the possible misuse and/or storage of these firearms – especially in our living facilities. With 830+ students living on our campus, we pride ourselves in maintaining safety and trust throughout our living facilities – this would erode if we would introduce weapons. Combining firearms with students who are possibly experiencing anxiety/depression, experimenting with alcohol and other drugs, and do not have fully developed brains has the possibly to shift from being safe to being tragic very quickly.

Finally, we are incredibly fortunate to have highly trained police in our communities and on-campus. In the event of the unthinkable – like an active shooter situation – we need to ensure those that are trained can effectively react to mitigate the risk. Walking into a high-risk situation – the officers would be unable to know who the threat is. We know that for most what to do in a high-adrenaline moment does not come naturally. That is why our military and law enforcement officers spend countless hours practicing, training, and testing in hopes that

they react appropriately to counter violence. This is not something you learn in one field training or by passing one written test.

Passage of this bill, as presented, could compromise the safety and security of our students, employees, and visitors. We respectfully request a do not pass on HB 1311, or for the committee to consider an amendment allowing for concealed weapons to be excluded from our campuses.

Thank you.