

HB 1365

House Energy and Natural Resources

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Doug Darling, President Lake Region State College

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Chair Porter and members of the committee, for the record, my name is Doug Darling, and I serve as President of Lake Region State College. I am here testifying in opposition to HB 1365. I am a strong supporter of the 2nd amendment. I'm a life member of the NRA, holder of a ND Conceal Carry permit, and a NRA/ATA/Shooting USA certified coach. I coach a 4H Shooting Sports team, High School Clay Target team and a College Clay Target team. I am a firm believer in the right to keep and bear arms, but I do not believe we need concealed and open carry of firearms on college campuses.

Most of our students are between the ages of 18-24. At this age they haven't completed the cognitive development of their brains. Their ability to make complex decisions is not fully developed. The decision to use deadly force is a complex decision. Our campuses are places where students of all ages go to learn, live, participate in extra and cocurricular activities, research, and compete in athletics. We have students, faculty and staff on our campuses 24/7 365 days a year. They should feel safe where they are living and learning. Allowing firearms on campuses will have the opposite effect for many.

The mental health of our students is a major concern with respect to allowing firearms on campuses. A Harvard study shows that 50% of students deciding to commit suicide act within 20 minutes and 73% within 1 hour. Having immediate access to firearms is very concerning to me. Even the US military doesn't allow possession of firearms in their barracks or dormitories.

I respectfully ask for a do not pass vote on HB1365.