

Label: UWR87001

Date Introduced: March 9, 2017

Date Voted On: March 9, 2017

Date Passed: March 9, 2017

A Resolution Opposing the Passage of HB 280 “Campus Carry” at Georgia State University

WHEREAS, the Student Government Association serves as the official voice of students at Georgia State University, and,

WHEREAS, Governor Nathan Deal vetoed HB 859, the 2016 version of HB 280, and has called to the General Assembly to make “the unauthorized possession and/or use of a firearm on a college campus an act that carries an increased penalty or an enhanced sentence for the underlying crime”¹, and,

WHEREAS, United States Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia in *Columbia v. Heller* stated “the right secured by the Second Amendment is not unlimited...laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings...”², and,

WHEREAS, when a random sample of Georgia State University undergraduate, graduate, Perimeter College and College of Law students were surveyed regarding their support of HB 859, the 2016 version of HB 280, 66% of respondents opposed the legislation and expressed concerns that campus would become less safe if the legislation passed³, and,

WHEREAS, university professors have expressed concern for their safety and opposition to HB 280, which could cause them to want to avoid sensitive subjects with students, drop topics from the curriculum, and/or limit student access to office hours, therefore limiting the opportunity for open dialogue and free speech on campus, and,

WHEREAS, carrying a concealed handgun does not necessarily protect individuals from being a victim and “individuals in possession of a gun were 4.46 ($P < .05$) times more likely to be shot in an assault than those not in possession,”⁴ and,

¹ "Deal issues 2016 veto statements." Governor Nathan Deal Office of the Governor. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Feb. 2017.

² Scalia, Justice. "DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA v. HELLER." DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA v. HELLER. N.p., 18 Mar. 2008. Web. 27 Feb. 2017.

³ This survey was open to students for 48 hours. There were 756 respondents throughout a diverse pool of students. See appendix A for the survey results.

⁴ Branas, C. C., Richmond, T. R., Culhane, D. P., Ten Have, T. R., & Wiebe, D. J. (2009). Investigating the link between gun possession and gun assault. *American Journal of Public Health*, 99, 1–7. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2009.188045

WHEREAS, “the presence of firearms could lead to conflicts between roommates, classmates and others on campus, escalating to the point where one or more individuals could be injured or killed as a result of gun violence,”⁵ and,

WHEREAS, in the event of a campus shooting, authorities will have difficulty distinguishing between those acting in self-defense and the offender(s) with the presence of weapons drawn, thus creating an unsafe situation with increased confusion and threat potential, and,

WHEREAS, due to recent robberies and crime on Georgia State University’s campuses, Georgia State University’s administration has already begun increasing serious security measures to make campus safer by hiring additional police officers and increasing the number of officers on duty, and,

WHEREAS, the Student Government Association believes that enabling students to have possession of a concealed firearm is neither a pressing need nor a decision that would necessarily solve the issue of crime on campus, and,

WHEREAS, the Student Government Association opposes any actions pursued by the State of Georgia to legally allow non-law enforcement officials the ability to possess concealed handguns and firearms at Georgia State University, **NOW THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY THAT

Section 1: This resolution shall be known as the “Opposition to the State of Georgia House Bill 280 “Campus Carry” Resolution.”

Section 2: Based from the research and information of the aforementioned studies, the legalization of concealed carry of firearms on college campuses would create increased safety risks for the Georgia State University Police Department and the campus community, rather than make it a safer place as intended by the authors of HB 280.

Section 3: The potential issues of handgun thefts on campus, an increase of armed robberies on campus, the lack of necessary training for students acting in self-defense with a firearm, and an increased potential of deaths on campus could be avoided by the non-passage of HB 280 and the continuation of the concealed firearms ban on public college campuses.

⁵ 3 Harnisch, T. L. (2008, November). Concealed weapons on state college campuses: In pursuit of individual liberty and collective security (A higher education policy brief). American Association of State Colleges and Universities. Retrieved from <http://www.aascu.org/media/pm/pdf/pmdec08.pdf>

Section 4: The 2015 passage of a similar campus carry law, State of Texas Senate Bill 11, does not have sufficient information to discern the magnitude and consequences of campus carry practices as either effective and preventative. The lack of viable data and research to conclude campus carry as a preventative rather than reactionary practice indicates that the passage of HB 280 would be an irresponsible and inadequately vetted decision.

Section 5: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Nathan Deal, Governor of the State of Georgia; Dr. Douglas Covey, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dr. Darryl Holloman, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students.

Section 6: This resolution shall take effect immediately upon passage by the Student Government Association, the welfare of the students requiring it.

Respectively Submitted By:

Anthony Nguyen, Communications Director, Atlanta Campus

Sponsor(s):

Maxwell Turner - Freshman Liaison, Atlanta Campus

Usra Mohamed - President Pro Tempore, Atlanta Campus

ACTION TAKEN BY THE STUDENT SENATE

VOTE for: 22 against: 1 abstention: 1

ACTION TAKEN BY THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Signature *George Onyiah* Date 3/30/17

