

KNOW YOUR IX

Empowering students to stop sexual violence

Campus Guns Enable Campus Rape: Stop H.B. 859

Bottom Line: If enacted, Georgia House Bill 859 would allow students to carry loaded firearms on college campuses. This would endanger students and exacerbate sexual and dating violence with likely fatal consequences. As Landen Gambill, a dating violence victim who attends the University of North Carolina, has said, “If my rapist had a gun at school, I have no doubt I would be dead.”¹ More specifically, H.B. 859 would:

Increase the dangers of campus sexual and dating violence. Sexual and dating violence is pervasive on college campuses: One in five women will be sexually assaulted while in college,² and 32 percent of female students report having been abused by a dating partner. Guns are the most common weapons used in the murders of intimate partners,³ and students who carry weapons on campus are more likely to be perpetrators of physical and sexual violence at college than those who do not.⁴ In Georgia, domestic violence homicide by firearm is particularly rampant: The state ranks ninth in the nation in its rate of men killing women in single-victim homicides,⁵ and guns are by far the leading cause of death in Georgia domestic violence fatalities.⁶ Further, Georgia ranks *highest* in the nation in teen dating violence, and the majority of relationships that end in homicide begin when victims are in their high school or early college years. Lifting campus gun bans will endanger students -- particularly those in abusive relationships -- and could cost Georgia students their lives.

Fail to prevent the vast majority of assaults on college campuses. Some proponents of these dangerous bills have suggested that allowing students to carry guns would protect them from becoming victims of sexual assault. This could not be further from the truth. Women, as well as people of other genders, are most in danger of suffering sexual violence while in the company of someone they know and trust: Countless studies affirm that the vast majority of campus rapes are perpetrated by the victim’s partner, friend, or close acquaintance.⁷ These are precisely the people around whom victims would never think to carry a gun, let alone use one. And the presence of a gun in a case of domestic violence makes it *five times* more likely that the victim will be murdered, regardless of who owns the gun. Though some individual victims might believe that they are safer while carrying a gun, the research is clear: Arming potential victims is not an effective strategy for

¹ Know Your IX, Petition to Colorado State House et. al., “Don’t Vote to Allow Guns on College Campuses,” CHANGE.ORG (2015), <http://chn.ge/1TL6aAC>.

² See LYNN LANGTON & SOFI SINOZICH, U.S. DEP’T OF JUSTICE, RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMIZATION AMONG COLLEGE-AGED FEMALES, 1995-2013 (Dec. 2014), <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/rsavcaf9513.pdf> [<http://perma.cc/LY4U-TV6A>].

³ ARKADI GERNEY & CHELSEA PARSONS, WOMEN UNDER THE GUN: HOW GUN VIOLENCE AFFECTS WOMEN AND 4 POLICY SOLUTIONS TO BETTER PROTECT THEM, Center for American Progress (2014), <http://ampr.gs/1MPkQrp>.

⁴ MATTHEW MILLER, DAVID HEMENWAY & HENRY WECHSLER, GUNS AND GUN THREATS AT COLLEGE, JOURNAL OF AMERICAN COLLEGE HEALTH 50.2 1 (2002), <http://archive.sph.harvard.edu/cas/Documents/Gunthreats2/gunspdf.pdf>.

⁵ VIOLENCE POLICY CENTER, WHEN MEN MURDER WOMEN 9 (Sept. 2014), <http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2014.pdf>.

⁶ GEORGIA COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & THE GEORGIA COMMISSION ON FAMILY VIOLENCE, GEORGIA DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW PROJECT 46 (Mar. 17, 2014), <http://gcadv.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/2013-Fatality-Review-Report-Final.pdf> [hereinafter DV Fatality Review].

⁷ National Institute of Justice, *Most Victims Know Their Attacker* (Oct. 1, 2008), <http://bit.ly/1PrE9ZC>.

preventing sexual or dating violence, and will actually increase the likelihood that victims or other bystanders will be wounded or killed.

Ignore the voices of survivors, advocates, and community members. The passage of campus carry bills is overwhelmingly opposed by students,⁸ university presidents and other higher education officials,⁹ campus safety advocates,¹⁰ Georgia voters,¹¹ and survivors of sexual and dating violence.¹²

If you care about the safety of students, join us in letting Georgia legislators know how you feel about H.B. 859. Just a few minutes of your time could help save lives. **Scan this QR Code on your phone or visit www.knowyourIX.org/gunsoffcampusGA to learn simple ways you can help defeat this bill!**



Take action now! Scan the code to learn how.

About Know Your IX

Founded in 2013, Know Your IX is a survivor- and youth-led organization that aims to empower students to end sexual and dating violence in their schools. We envision a world in which all students can pursue their civil right to educations free from violence and harassment. We recognize that gender violence is both a cause of inequity and a consequence of it, and we believe that women, transgender, and gender non-conforming students will not have equality in education or opportunity until the violence ends. We raise awareness and provide legal education for students about gender violence and Title IX; and train, support, and mobilize a national network of student activists across the country. Learn more at www.knowyourIX.org.

⁸ Mark Ransford, *Most Students Don't Want Guns On Their Campuses* (Sept 9, 2013), <http://bit.ly/1mWhryA>.

⁹ Scott Jaschik, *Presidents vs. Guns*, INSIDE HIGHER ED. (Jun. 4, 2014), <http://bit.ly/1SUKAOB>.

¹⁰ Tara Culp-Ressler, *Why Allowing Concealed Weapons on College Campuses Is Not a Women's Issue*, THINK PROGRESS (Jan. 9, 2013, 9:00AM), <http://bit.ly/1nPzCZx>.

¹¹ Atlanta Journal Constitution, *Georgia Registered Voter Poll 27* (Jan. 9, 2014), http://media.cmgdigital.com/shared/news/documents/2014/01/10/30019_GA_Poll_Banner_Table.pdf (noting that 78% of registered Georgia voters oppose allowing students to carry guns on college campuses). *See also* Jay Bookman, *Georgia Voters Overwhelmingly Oppose Campus Carry*, ATLANTA JOURNAL CONSTITUTION (Jan. 28, 2016), <http://jaybookman.blog.myajc.com/2016/01/28/georgia-voters-overwhelmingly-oppose-campus-carry/>.

¹² Know Your IX, Petition to Colorado State House et. al., "Don't Vote to Allow Guns on College Campuses," CHANGE.ORG (2015), <http://chn.ge/1TL6aAC>.