

January 26, 2017

To: Senator Jacob LaTurner, Chair

Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs

From: Marge Ahrens, Co-President, League of Women Voters of Kansas

RE: SB 53

Senator LaTurner and Committee on Federal and State Affairs:

The League of Women Voters of Kansas supports SB 53 relating to local control of the decision of governments, mental health centers, schools and institutions of higher learning in determining whether or not weapons are allowed on their property.

The League sees the proliferation of handguns and semi-automatic assault weapons in the United States as a major health and safety threat to its citizens. Existing concealed carry legislation in Kansas gives free reign to possessors of firearms who secure weapons without background checks or training requirements . All are then free to carry weapons into buildings occupied by public servants, students and teachers and our most vulnerable citizens. Existing legislation adds extraordinary expenses to taxpayer supported entities should they choose to disallow concealed carry on their property.

We urge you to pass SB53 as a first step in protecting the self-determination of local governmental units in choosing to disallow concealed carry in their buildings without penalty of having to dedicate limited funds to security systems at the doors. Allow them to spend their already limited monies on their designated public service instead .