

Executive Summary

The University Has Studied the Potential Effect of “Campus Carry” Legislation

The possession and carry of firearms on university campuses has been the subject of recent and ongoing discussion in the Alabama Legislature and the legislatures of many of our sister states. In anticipation of further discussions and proposals, Chancellor Ray Hayes convened a committee of campus, System Office, and Health System representatives, including government relations, police, faculty, staff, legal, facilities, and emergency management professionals from UA, UAB, and UAH to study these issues.

The Founders Banned Weapons from Campuses

At the time of the establishment of our nation and its public institutions, the Founders and authors of the Declaration of Independence and Constitution recognized that weapons present particular concerns for college campuses. Even before it opened, The University of Virginia board—including its members Thomas Jefferson and James Madison—banned weapons from campus. The earliest conduct rules of The University of Alabama contained similar prohibitions.

Justice Scalia Recognized the Constitutionality of “Longstanding Prohibitions” of Weapons from “Sensitive Places”

In his 2008 majority opinion in *DC v. Heller*, Justice Scalia specifically stated that the rights recognized by the Second Amendment do not, and should not, “cast doubt on longstanding prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill, or laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings . . .”

Our Campuses and the Health System Contain Many of the Most “Sensitive Places”

Our campuses and the Health System are complex “sensitive places,” as that term is used in Second Amendment analysis. They include residence halls, private offices, student conduct and faculty/staff grievance or hearing spaces, areas where K-12 school-sponsored activities occur, ticketed sporting events, programs for minors (e.g. camps), hospitals, infant and Pre-K programs, patient care and mental health service areas, and numerous others.

Attempts in Other States Have Led to Overly Complex and Confusing Regulations

Because of our complexity, a blanket rule allowing weapons “on campus” would be unworkable, not to mention contrary to our most cherished Constitutional principles. Regulating around that rule would be unnecessarily complex, as has been shown by the experience in other states.

Our Committee Recommends Against Changes to the “Longstanding Prohibitions”

It is the recommendation of our committee that the Chancellor and our government affairs officials continue to oppose any legislation that would impact the weapons prohibitions that protect the sensitive operations and the sensitive places of our campuses, the hospital, and Health System. The law recognizing the sanctity of our campuses is as old as the Republic, and the original intent of the Founders should continue to be respected.

