

To whom it may concern:

I wish to thank you for taking time to consider my testimony. My name is Steven Hook. I am a gun owning Democrat that lives in Sandy. I am writing today to let you know why I feel you should oppose this bill. I feel that our current definition of a public place is sufficient as it stands. If we were to change this statute it would not only change the definition, which I feel is already adequate and not in need of change, it would allow for more entities to make decisions on whether or not they will allow legal law abiding citizens who have a concealed handgun license to carry in their location. This would be very challenging for the law abiding citizen to keep track of which areas are not only considered public, but which out of those will not allow you to be armed. This opens the way for errors to occur because the gun owner can't easily keep track of where they can and can't have their weapon.

Right now as it stands by definition it is clear where you can and cannot have a concealed weapon and the chance for being confused of where you can carry is very limited. If this bill were to be enacted it would essentially criminalize citizens who take steps to ensure that they are following the laws, submit themselves to background checks, pay for the privilege to have a license, stay on top of the laws, and be responsible gun owners. It could be asked if they are law abiding citizens, then why would they break the law in the first place? The answer is simply that they would be breaking the law without even realizing it. That's because you don't necessarily know which property is owned or maintained by a certain institution. A vacant lot could be owned by a school or city and I guarantee that I don't know who the owner is and that they have made it their policy that firearms are not permitted.

This really opens the possibility that lawful citizens get very confused about where they can and cannot have their firearm. They should not be punished with jail time, severe fines, the loss of their ability to have a firearm all because they got confused. Additionally as it relates to the definition of a public space you would no longer be able to have a firearm in the trunk of your car in a lockbox while you are at the airport to drop someone off, or pick them up, this means that because you can't legally have it in the parking garage you can't have it in your vehicle when you leave your residence or place of business, that means you are not able to exercise your right to protect yourself even outside of where you were being told you can't bring it.

I would be more than happy to check my gun in at the airport or any other public building that may be defined, for safekeeping and check it out when I leave, but that is not being offered as an option. This option would make more sense as it would not prevent you from being unarmed for all the other places that you would be legally allowed to be armed.

Furthermore, I don't see the reason that we would need to double the fees for having a concealed handgun license. What help would that be providing? The only thing that I have seen is that it would just be used as a deterrent or roadblock for those who wish to follow the law and take the necessary steps to identify themselves and prove that they are decent citizens.

In closing, I strongly urge you to oppose this bill as it really isn't making these "public buildings/land" safer, the criminals who wish to be armed in them won't listen to the laws that are in place, they already don't today. Crime and mass shootings will not be decreased by this bill, the criminals still will continue to do what they want. The law abiding citizens though who go out of their way are the ones who would be punished and further restricted

Thank you again for reading my testimony..