



The Badger
HERALD

To ensure safety of UW campus, it is crucial that students be allowed to carry firearms

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Last month, the U.S. Court of Appeals for Washington D.C. denied a request to reassess a decision that struck down the city's restrictions on handgun ownership. It's another victory for the Second Amendment.

Washington D.C. continues to impose countless laws on citizens who simply desire to own a weapon to defend themselves. One law blocks people from carrying a handgun within 1,000 feet of a school or university. While concealed carry is not blocked in the city, this law means that those who want to carry are prevented from doing so almost everywhere.

Yet these gun control measures have not led to lower crime rates. The nation's capital has a violent crime rate of 12.69 and property crime rate of 46.76 per 1,000 residents.

The massacre in Las Vegas is horrifying, but that death toll is repeated every month in Chicago. It is a city overflowing with gun control advocates and new laws.

The Las Vegas shooting has brought up the gun debate again. What gun control activists fail to understand is that despicable people will always find ways to commit acts of violence.

There has never been a better reason for the University of Wisconsin to allow guns on the campus.

In case members of ASM weren't aware, extensive gun control laws don't work. When it comes to assault weapons, there was a ban in place between 1994 and 2004. Towards the end of the ban, a report from the Department of Justice was published. The researchers concluded "we cannot clearly credit the ban with any of the nation's recent drop in gun violence.... Should it be renewed, the ban's effects on gun violence are likely to be small at best and perhaps too small for reliable measurement." The ban was not renewed.

In examining assault weapons bans and concealed weapons laws, Quinnipiac University economist Mark Gius found that "states with more restrictive CCW laws had gun-related murder rates that were 10 percent higher. In addition, the Federal assault weapons ban is significant and positive, indicating that murder rates were 19.3 percent higher when the Federal ban was in effect."

When gun control advocates make arguments about gun deaths, they often do so with misleading statistics. For example, an article by Libby Isentein of National Journal links gun-related deaths

with restrictions on firearms and shows that states with more gun laws have fewer gun-related deaths.

The problem with the article is that it includes suicides among the data, so states with low homicides and less gun barriers were depicted as having major gun epidemics when in reality, many of these deaths could be accredited to suicide. Moreover, her research fails to review overall violent crime. When Thomas A. Firey of the Cato Institute responded by running regressions of Isentein's work, he found that gun restrictions failed to reduce violent crime.

When looking at murders as a whole, a report by the Crime Prevention Research Center revealed that 51 percent of murders occurred in just 2 percent of the nation's counties. The counties with high rates of murders often include major cities and are controlled by Democratic politicians implementing the most draconian of gun laws. The year before, the Pew Research Center found that gun ownership is 2.11 times higher in rural areas (the exact counties where there are little to no murders) compared to urban areas.

In fact, when examining gun homicides in particular, the entire notion of a gun epidemic can be thrown out the window. Economics professor Mark J. Perry of the University of Michigan has tracked gun ownership and gun homicides. From 1993 to 2013, the number of privately-owned firearms increased by 56 percent, but the gun homicide rate has decreased by 49 percent.

Criminals will always find ways to carry out their crimes.

For this campus to be as safe as possible, it is critical that students be permitted to carry firearms. During the ASM Legislative Affairs Committee's fatuous protest, people held signs that included slogans like "How do you feel about guns in Camp Randall?" and "We all deserve a safe campus." Yes, we do deserve a safe campus and the best way to guarantee that is to allow students to carry guns to protect themselves, their peers and professors.

Legislative Affairs chair Katherine Kerwin is wrong when she says the bill is "detrimental." In fact, the state legislature's new concealed carry bill is empowering. More guns does lead to less crime.