

"It's a fundamental right": Second Amendment RSO proposes concealed carry on campus

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Courtesy of Students for the Second Amendment

Opponents of concealed carry argue that guns on college campuses would only increase risk. In a report from the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, guns on college campuses can increase risk due to several factors, including the prevalence of alcohol and drugs on campus, in addition to the possibility of gun theft.

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SENIOR REPORTER

On Wednesday, the "nervous" president of Students for the Second Amendment, Zoe Callaway, made a major announcement. Callaway, a senior, revealed the RSO's plans to bring concealed carry to the university. Prepared to "fight with logic," Callaway said she is determined to make her federal rights a campus reality.

The group's announcement followed their event, "NRA University: Are U Armed?" The event, which shared the pro-gun view on the gun debate, was also in partnership with the College Republicans and the Young Americans for Liberty RSOs.

At the event, held in Memorial Hall, students listened to lecturer and NRA representative Rocco Praglowski explained the history of the NRA. Dispelling stereotypes and myths about Second Amendment supporters, Praglowski provided background and "fact-based"

information to educate and encourage pro-gun activism. Praglowski also revealed what he believed are commonalities between pro-gun and anti-gun activists saying.

"We all have the same goal of reducing crime and violence, we just have a different way of getting there," Praglowski said.

After the announcement, students were invited to participate in a forum and discussion on the endorsement of concealed carry. Callaway, passionately defended the announcement and noted that their plans were important to ensuring students' constitutional rights.

"It's a fundamental right," Callaway said. "And if you do not have your Second Amendment right, as far as I am concerned, you do not really have your First [Amendment right] or any of your other rights for that matter."

Callaway, in addition to other executive board members of the club, saw that the proposal will only make campus safer, giving students the opportunity to arm and protect themselves in unsafe situations.

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Referring to the 4Chan forum post that posed a vague threat of "bearing arms at a university near Philadelphia" last October, Callaway insisted that she would have felt safer if she or a classmate had a firearm. The threat was later deemed by UDPD officials to be a false alarm.

"I was almost in tears thinking of how if I can have concealed carry on this campus, or one of my classmates could — I wouldn't be in sitting here crying," Callaway said. "My 135-person class would not have had five people in there right now and no one would be scared for their life because they would be protected."

Callaway also cited UD Alerts and local crime as more of a reason for students, especially women, to support the newest proposal.

"Gun-free zones like our campus only stand to create victims, you can't defend yourself against a gun with a slingshot or with your fists," Callaway said. "It's not possible and it's not gonna happen."

The "ideal" campus carry rule, as Callaway described, would grant in-state and out-of-state students with pre-existing permits the permission to carry their registered firearms on campus. However, under current Delaware law, the state only grants concealed carry permits to residents over the age of 18. Additionally, resident carriers are prohibited from purchasing handguns until the age of 21.

Once of legal age, interested permit holders must go through an extensive process. Applicants under state law would be required to show proof of age, extent of moral character as well other personal screening techniques. In addition, applicants must verify that a permit is necessary for their own protection, a certificate must also be signed by five "respectable citizens." These are a few of the many conditions outlined under current Delaware state law.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, only eight states have laws that allow concealed carry on college campuses. Eighteen states have banned firearms and concealed carry completely, while the remaining 23 states let universities determine their own guidelines, which includes Delaware. If the Students for the Second Amendment are successful with their proposal, the university would become the first school within the state to allow concealed carry on campus.

Students for the Second Amendment Vice President Dan Foltz said he understands that the group's proposal will receive backlash. Foltz, a sophomore, said he hopes to emphasize that the organization only intends to make campus safer.

"As soon as you say 'concealed carry on campus' people are automatically going to be up in arms," Foltz said. "But if we can talk to people and make them understand why we are doing it and we can talk to them on more of a human level, the more we can do to make this a safer campus, the better off we are going to be."

Callaway and Foltz, who both joined the organization due to their upbringing and interest in guns, said they wish to garner more support from other students in the following weeks, adding to the beginning support they claimed the organization already has gained.

"If I have to keep coming back to this school that I love so dearly to help the club fight I will do it," Callaway said. "We know it is going to take probably much longer than any of us will be at the university, but it is something that we want to do to get the discussion started."

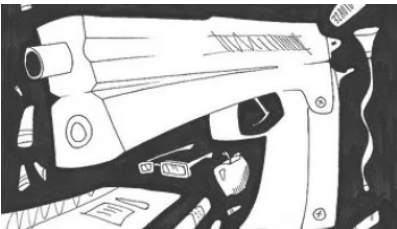
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