

Written by Allan Besselink
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[The Second Amendment on Flickr by ianturton](http://www.flickr.com/photos/ianturton/1031930358/ "The Second Amendment on Flickr by ianturton")  They call it the Second Amendment: "the right to keep and bear arms". It's always good for a hot debate ... or two ... or a thousand.

Here in Texas, there is a [concealed handgun law](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/ftp/forms/lr-16.pdf "Texas Concealed Handgun Law"). Initially, there were certain limitations as to where you could take your weapon. You could have it on your premises and in your vehicle. But you couldn't take it to, for example, an establishment that sells alcoholic beverages. Probably a smart thing - alcohol and firearms just don't mix.

But now, we're on the verge of approving (or have already approved) some new laws in the Texas legislature. How about the legal right to take your weapon to work (SB 730)? You just never know if you're going to need to pack that piece to have some extra voting power in the next staff meeting. That one was approved by the Senate. Or if you're a student, how about taking it to class with you (HB 1893)? Of course, the "right to bear arms" is exceedingly important at exam time. That one is under discussion. And as for alcohol and firearms not mixing, how about SB 729 - a defense for someone carrying a gun into a bar if no sign was posted to the contrary.

But in the words of Senator Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo ... out in northwest Texas, I might add): ... *"because we have 300,000 people in Texas who are licensed to carry concealed weapons and no one's started shooting everyone else ... I don't see it as that big of a deal"*. And while we're at it, let's thank Senator Glenn Hegar (R-Katy) for authoring two of these bills. Three-hundred-thousand people in Texas with concealed weapons? That's the size of a small Central American country (like [Belize](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belize "Belize"))!

From what I understand, during the last session there was a proposal put forth for a bill that would allow the owner of the weapon to strap it into a holster in full view. Great ... that puts us back into the era of Jesse James and the Wild West. And where is John Wayne when you really need him? I can hear the background music from "Gunsmoke" now ...

Of course, I can hear those now who will say something to the effect of "if you have the right to carry your weapon, events like [insert here - Columbine, Virginia Tech, and sadly now Binghamton] wouldn't happen. Well, that assumes that a) people know how to use their weapon and b) they know how to use it while under duress. There may be many that can address a) safely but very few that have any clue how to address b). How about looking at the root of the problem. Has it become a cultural issue? If so, the solutions are not simply having more people carry more weapons. It sounds like the Cold War all over again - escalation between the "good" and the "bad".

And should you ever need to see yet another side of the discussion, a "must watch" would be ["Bowling For Columbine" 2002](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bowling?for?Columbine "Bowling For Columbine").

I understand the concept of people having the right to be safe and secure. But when the ["right to keep and bear arms"](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right?to?keep?and?bear?arms "Right to keep and bear arms") was first conceived, the United States was a fledgling republic. The purpose of the Second Amendment being included in the Constitution was most likely relative to Thomas Jefferson's talk about a revolution being necessary every 100 years or so. There was a context to it.

And let us not forget the complete language of the Second Amendment: **A well regulated militia**,

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being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the People to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."

It's now the 21st century. Is this now relevant to the world as we know it? And we must remember that with "rights" come "responsibilities". Just because you have the legal right to carry a weapon doesn't mean you should or must.

I just have to wonder though - was Jesse James a Republican or Democrat? ♦

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