

- SUBJECT:** Storage of firearms in private vehicles on university campuses
- COMMITTEE:** Homeland Security and Public Safety — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 8 ayes — Pickett, Fletcher, Dale, Flynn, Kleinschmidt, Lavender, Sheets, Simmons
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Cortez
- WITNESSES:** For — Ryan Lambert; Alice Tripp, Texas state rifle association; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Ian Armstrong; Keith Brown; Michael Cargill; Annita Ellison; Brian Ercoline; Marida Favia del Core Borromeo, Exotic Wildlife Association; Leland Freeman; Robert Gordon; Caroline Gorman, Libertarian Party of Travis County; Phil Graves; Kenneth Gross; Chris Howe; Guillermo Lopez; Rachel Malone, Texas Firearms Freedom; Howard Ray; Philip Smith; Tom Swearingen; Lucy Wendt; Justin-Blair Wofford)
- Against — Saurah Tabrizi; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Yannis Banks, Texas NAACP; Jim Bryce; Ellison Carter; Molly Cummings; Brette Garner; Nicole Golden, Moms Demand Action; Lisa Hamilton; Dwight Harris, Texas AFT; Allison Heinrich; Debbie Hersh; Brooke Hersh-Thompson; Ramey Ko; Glen Maxey, Texas Democratic Party; Scott Medlock; Caitlin Miller; Nick Mitchell, University of Texas:College of Natural Sciences; Joseph Oliveri, Rosalie Oliveri, Community Committee Against Gun Violence; Tess Ortega; Kathleen Points; Madonna Ramp; Joanne Richards; Heather Ross, Gun and Mental Health Action Group, Occupy the NRA; Cissy Sanders, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America; Stewart Snider, League of Women Voters TX; Gyl Switzer, Mental Health America of Texas; Amanda Van Epps; Robin Wallace; Bridget Wiedenmeyer; Sandra Wilson Mandell-Thiher; John Woods, Texas Gun Sense; Lucien Zahendra, Moms Demand Action; Crystal Zhao)
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* RenEarl Bowie, Steve Moninger, Sherrie Zgabay, Texas Department of Public Safety)
- BACKGROUND:** In 2011 the 82nd Legislature enacted SB 321 by Hegar to allow

employees to store firearms in their locked cars parked at their work place. The bill prevented employers from banning or punishing this storage.

**DIGEST:** HB 1077 would prevent public and private institutions of higher education from adopting or enforcing rules prohibiting or placing restrictions on the storage or transportation of a firearm or ammunition in a locked, privately owned or leased motor vehicle by a person who lawfully possessed the firearm or ammunition on a street or driveway located on the campus of the institution or in a parking lot, parking garage, or other parking area located on campus.

The bill would take effect on September 1, 2013.

**SUPPORTERS SAY:** HB 1077 would allow students to store firearms in their locked cars on a university or college campus just as administrators, faculty, staff, and other employees of higher education institutions are able to do under current law. Many universities have adopted administrative policies that prohibit students from storing firearms in their cars. This can lead to students being disciplined, suspended, or expelled. However, many students commute to campuses daily or attend evening classes and want to be able to protect themselves during that drive. College students often drive long distances to and from home between semesters or on long weekends. They often transport their favorite rifle or shotgun with them so that they can hunt on weekends or during breaks.

HB 1077 would reinforce students' basic right to self-defense. It is important to let law-abiding citizens have access to their firearms for self-defense because laws alone do not stop criminals or the disturbed from committing violent crimes. The bill would not fill campuses with firearms. They would remain stored in locked cars. As such, they would not affect the learning or educational climate on campus.

**OPPONENTS SAY:** By allowing more guns on campus, HB 1077 would make campuses less safe. Campus police and others have argued that an increase in guns leads to an increase in gun violence. Others worry that an increase in the number of lethal weapons on campus would detract from an environment designed to foster learning and academic debate. Additional guns reinforce a siege mentality and a generalized feeling that people are under assault. A gun owner or a passerby also could be endangered if a firearm discharged accidentally.