

MEMORANDUM

TO: UT Board of Trustees
UT Advocacy Council Oversight Committee

FROM: Hank Dye
Vice President for Public and Government Relations

DATE: February 23, 2012

The University of Tennessee remains committed to providing a safe learning and work environment on all our campuses and facilities throughout the state. It is for that reason UT joins the Tennessee Board of Regents, Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association, and the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police in opposing any change to current state law that would have the effect of increasing the presence of guns on college campuses.

We are asking you to contact your state elected officials now and request that no changes be made to the existing law that would have the effect of increasing guns on college campuses.

The groundwork is being laid in the state legislature to pass some of the broadest gun-possession-in-the-workplace legislation in the state's history. [SB3002 \(Faulk, R-Church Hill\)](#) would rewrite state law and allow permit holders to store firearms in their personal vehicles at their places of employment. The bill is before the Senate Judiciary Committee. Tennessee's business advocates, individual employers, and the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry are adamantly opposed to the bill on the grounds that it violates the private property rights of business owners and employers that choose to restrict firearms from their premises. Currently, the bill includes all places of employment – public and private – including hospitals, K-12 schools, colleges, and government offices and buildings. SB3002 is co-sponsored by [Senator Mae Beavers](#) (R-Mt. Juliet) and Senate Education Chair [Dolores Gresham](#) (R-Somerville). The House companion bill, [HB3560](#), is sponsored by Representative [Eddie Bass](#) (D-Pleasant Hill).

Another bill by Faulk and Bass ([SB2992/HB3559](#)) is of equal concern to the business community and public employers. This measure prevents employers from asking employment applicants or employees whether they own, possess, or transport firearms or ammunition. The bill is intended to keep an employer from not hiring an applicant for a job if the employer believes the hire will result in a potential conflict with the employee and the employer's desire to keep the business premises gun-free. This bill is before the Senate Commerce, Labor, and Agriculture Committee.

The possession of firearms on college campuses and the storing of firearms in personal vehicles on campuses are of great concern to UT and others within the higher education and law enforcement communities. The organizations listed above believe that current state law adequately provides the necessary exceptions regarding who may possess firearms on college campuses.

Both SB3002 and SB2992 are currently scheduled for a vote in their respective committees during the week of March 5.

Thank you.