

State Senator Brian Birdwell  
Senate District 22



State Representative Allen Fletcher  
House District 130

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 26, 2015

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## **BIRDWELL, FLETCHER FILE CAMPUS PERSONAL PROTECTION ACT**

*Senate Bill 11, House Bill 937 affirm rights of Texas CHL-holders on college campuses*

AUSTIN—Texas State Senator Brian Birdwell (R-Granbury) and State Representative Allen Fletcher (R-Tomball/Cypress) filed legislation Monday to allow students, faculty and staff with a concealed handgun license (CHL) to carry firearms for personal protection on college campuses. Senate Bill 11—jointly authored by 19 state senators—and House Bill 937 also state that public colleges or universities may not circumvent the intent of the Act by imposing administrative bans or penalties on students or employees lawfully carrying their licensed handgun on campus.

"I'm proud to be filing this bill with the support of so many of my colleagues, as well as the full backing of the National Rifle Association and the Texas State Rifle Association," Birdwell said. "The affirmation of these citizens' rights to self-defense is long overdue, and I look forward to working this issue with Representative Fletcher."

"As a retired Houston Police officer, I know that officers cannot be everywhere at all times. Campus police cannot be in every classroom or academic building," Fletcher said. "As we have learned in the past, 'gun-free zones' have not been absent of crime. We must afford properly licensed adults the ability to protect themselves."

In a statement, Texas State Rifle Association Legislative Director Alice Tripp said, "The TSRA—the state-affiliate of the NRA—and our 45,000 Texas members strongly support Senator Birdwell's and Representative Fletcher's legislation allowing adult Texas concealed handgun licensees to have this option for personal protection with them in their vehicles, on campus property, and in the classroom. Personal protection is a basic human right."

The Act also includes several statutory clauses to ensure current law is not sidestepped by:

- affirming private property rights by ensuring that independent or private universities may establish rules concerning CHL-holders on their campuses;
- allowing all colleges and universities to establish rules and regulations governing the storage of handguns in on-campus housing facilities;
- ensuring colleges and universities may post notices that athletic events and sporting venues are off-limits to CHL-holders carrying a firearm;
- clarifying that locations which are prohibited under the Penal Code—bars, hospitals, and K-12 educational facilities, for example—will remain off-limits to CHL-holders even if they happen to be located on a campus;
- and providing colleges and universities immunity from liability for the actions of CHL-holders on campus—except in cases where private or independent institutions have adopted administrative prohibitions.

The Act in no way alters who can carry a concealed handgun. To obtain a CHL in Texas, a citizen must be at least 21 years old (or active-duty military); must pass state and federal background checks; must submit fingerprints to the Department of Public Safety; cannot be chemically dependent, of unsound mind, or delinquent in paying official fines, fees or child support; must be otherwise eligible to purchase a handgun in the State of Texas; and must complete several hours of comprehensive DPS training, including a live-fire shooting proficiency test.

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