

**State Representative
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Oregon University Gun Rules Violate State Law Representatives Hanna & Thatcher Call for Changes

(Salem) “We are concerned about the rights of legal gun owners throughout our state and hope the University System will seek to remove any Administrative Rules or other policies which infringe on those rights”, wrote [State Representatives Bruce Hanna](#) (R-Roseburg) and [Kim Thatcher](#) (R-Keizer, St. Paul, Newberg) in a letter to the [Chancellor of the Oregon University System](#) (OUS) today. State law ([Oregon Revised Statutes 166.170](#)) says the authority to regulate firearms is “vested solely in the Legislative Assembly.”

Last week, a student at [Western Oregon University](#) was arrested on campus and charged with carrying a firearm in a public building. In response, the letter continued, “we believe this action was taken in direct violation of state law and we implore the Oregon University System to change its policies and request the charges be dropped against this student.”

“Like all Oregon citizens, college students have a right to defend themselves while on campus. Oregon law clearly prohibits state agencies from using their regulatory authority to prohibit the legal possession of concealed firearms,” said Representative Hanna. “We believe the Oregon University System should immediately implement policies that are consistent with the Second Amendment and these state laws.”

Under state law ([Oregon Revised Statutes 166.370](#)), the student should not have been charged because he had a concealed handgun license and is exempt from sanctions. Hanna and Thatcher noted there have been several Opinions issued by the Legislative Counsel’s Office in the past few years which show the University System is violating state law. One of those opinions from 2004 explained the Oregon University System does not have the “authority to prohibit a person from carrying a permitted weapon on the campus of such schools, colleges, and institutions.”

“I have a concealed handgun license and I think its silly the University System doesn’t comply with state law,” said Teresa Lucas, a senior at Western. “I’ve heard from several students who think this policy is unlawful.” The letter from the legislators to the Chancellor pointed out “over the past several years many legislators have expressed their disappointment with the University System’s apparent disregard for state law.”

“I am very troubled by the OUS policies,” said Thatcher. “The conflict with state law has been brewing for a while now, but this latest incident has put the issue on the front burner.” Thatcher serves on the House Education Committee and has served on the House Judiciary Committee in previous legislative sessions. She is currently drafting legislation to enhance security measures at Oregon’s public colleges.

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