

## Colleges to allow guns on campus?

### State assessing antidote to mad school shooters

By Bob Unruh WorldNetDaily March 03, 2008

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**Arizona lawmakers** hope to stem the wave of unarmed students killed in campus slayings through **a plan that would let adults carry firearms onto the grounds of the state's universities.** "The police got to both the Virginia Tech murder scene and the **New Life Church** [in Colorado] in about six minutes," noted Larry Pratt, the chief of [Gun Owners of America](#). "At Virginia Tech, 30 people died. At New Life, two died in the parking lot and **once the bad guy got inside the building he was engaged by (armed) security team volunteers and nobody else died. In fact, he was finished in about 30 seconds.**" That, he said, ought to illustrate the issue as clear as anything.

In Arizona, legislation that would allow people to carry their guns onto community college or university campuses has been advancing, and now awaits further Senate action, after critics demanded public schools be removed from the plan. State Sen. Karen Johnson, the bill's sponsor, said she was reluctant to make that change, because "I still feel our little kindergartners are sitting there as sitting ducks," she told the Arizona Republic. But Johnson said the remaining bill now has a better chance to move forward. One recent vote on Senate Bill 1214, in the Senate Judiciary Committee, came just 11 days after a gunman killed five unarmed people and himself at Northern Illinois University. Pratt noted that **Utah and several local jurisdictions scattered around the U.S. already allow people with a license to carry their weapons onto campuses.** "We would like to see every state do something like that," he said, because of the **tragedies that have been repeated multiple times in the past few years: a gunman starts shooting and killing people, they die, and then police arrive.** "Until we change that sequence, we're going to continue to have people become victims," he told WND.

Pratt cited the April 2007 **Virginia Tech case**, in which shooter Cho Seung-Hui, 23, fatally shot 32 people in a dorm and a classroom before killing himself, as well as the **New Life Church shooting** in Colorado Springs, Colo., in December. Although the church operation is not identical to an educational campus, its sprawling acres and buildings and thousands of people **have similarities.** **Police arrived on both scenes within minutes, but the death tolls were 32 in Virginia, two in Colorado.** "What greater contrast can there be?" Pratt suggested. He also said **carrying a weapon, not just having it at home, is founded in reason.**

**"Eighty-five percent of the attacks against persons actually occur outside the home,"** he said, citing women in parking lots, motorists along a road, wherever victims might be.

And **just the deterrence would make a big difference.** He noted in the U.S., where citizens are allowed guns, **only 13 percent of home invasions happened when the home is occupied. In England, where firearms bans are much more expansive, the rate is 65 percent.** "Clearly signs that say 'No guns beyond this point' are not a deterrent," he said.

**Police chiefs** from Arizona State University, the University of Arizona and Northern Arizona told the newspaper **they fear confusion with having citizens armed would lead to more people being killed.** Officers could, they warned, shoot the wrong person. The latest attack on unarmed teachers and students happened on Valentine's Day, when Stephen Kazmierczak, 27, walked into a Northern Illinois University auditorium and shot and killed five people, and wounded 16 others. The gunman then shot himself.

The issue has been raised in recent weeks by a WND columnist, [Dennis Prager](#), a nationally syndicated radio talk-show host and author of several books, wrote: Which of these three options is more likely to prevent further murderous rampages: a) making universities closed campuses and increasing the police presence (as the president of NIU has promised to do); b) making guns much harder to obtain or c) enabling specially trained students and faculty to carry concealed weapons on campus? Because political correctness has replaced wisdom at nearly all universities, colleges are considering options a and b. But the only thing the first option will accomplish is to reduce the quality of university life and render the campus a larger version of the contemporary airport. And the second option will have no effect whatsoever since whoever wishes to commit murder will be able to obtain guns illegally. **But if would-be murderers know that anywhere they go to kill students, there is a real likelihood that one or two students will shoot them first, and if in fact some would-be murderer is killed before he can murder any, or at least many, students, we will see far fewer such attempts made.**

The [Arizona Citizens Defense League](#) notes the state constitution provides, "The right of the individual citizen to bear arms in defense of himself or the state shall not be impaired. ..." Lawmakers in Arizona told WND the legislation now is pending before the Senate. A Marine Corps veteran, identified as William, however, was urging action. The veteran, who said he now works in security in Baghdad, wrote lawmakers: "Sir, if I or any other responsible law-abiding gun owner was attending class in Illinois or Virginia on those fateful days and was allowed to carry, these tragedies could have been averted," he said. "Opponents ... say that it is irresponsible to allow 18-25 year old young adults their basic right of self-defense. I have to say that I find this argument absurd. There [are] young adults carrying firearms right here in Baghdad in the Army, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Navy. These servicemen and women's age does not in any way handicap them from being responsible with their firearms."

People who desire training in firearms handling also apparently would have no significant difficulty. Ignatius Piazza, founder and director of the [Frontsight Firearms Training Institute](#), said he was committing to provide every Arizona school teacher with a \$2,000 handgun course, free of charge, at the time the plan is approved. "Every time sanity begins to prevail with good legislators like Arizona Senate Majority Leader Theyer Verschoor and Sen. Karen Johnson introducing a real solution to protect our children from a violent attack, the unenlightened begin crying about their fear of teachers with guns," Piazza said. Piazza also dismissed school presidents' concerns over confused police officers. "When police arrive on the scene it will be very easy for them to identify the assailant. He will be the only dead body because an armed teacher stopped a potential massacre as soon as it started," he said.

**The gun-control advocates at the Brady Campaign already has objected,** however. "Armed students? Armed teachers? That is the response of the gun lobby to the horrible massacre at Virginia Tech," the group said. "Despite the massacre at Virginia Tech, **college campuses and schools are safer than the communities that surround them, precisely because those institutions have barred or tightly controlled firearms.** We need to support those institutions, not strip them of the ability to control firearms on campus." The group warned Nevada also has considered a plan to allow teachers to be armed, and **South Carolina, Alabama, Michigan and Ohio are looking at plans similar to Arizona's.**

But Pratt repeated his insistence that **it's important to be prepared for a deadly attack.** After killing two people at a Christian training center in Arvada, Colo., 24-year-old Matthew Murray went to Colorado Springs intending more murder and mayhem. Murray shot and killed two girls in the New Life Church's parking lot, then headed inside the building where thousands of worshippers were concluding a service. A volunteer security guard, Jeanne Assam, confronted him almost immediately and fired at him. He fell, and an autopsy later said he had shot himself.