



## THE ASSOCIATION OF TITLE IX ADMINISTRATORS

### Position Statement on Concealed Carry Legislation Related to Campus Sexual Violence

*This is the first in a series of 2015 position statements that ATIXA is issuing*

In an effort to further a political agenda to promote widespread access to guns, gun advocates and state legislators have recently advanced the notion that allowing students to carry concealed weapons on college campuses will deter sexual violence.

This craven and cynical position ignores the reality of the dynamics of sexual violence on college campuses and intentionally reinforces rape myths that repeatedly have been debunked by empirical data. It leverages the safety of campus victims for political gain and potentially endangers victims by lobbying to give concealed weapons to their attackers.

Consistently, research conducted by the Department of Justice and others<sup>1</sup> shows that the vast majority of sexual assaults committed against students on college campuses are committed by an individual known to the victim, occur in a shared setting (e.g., at a party, studying together in a dorm room) and involve alcohol as a facilitator for the assault. There is no research data supporting the idea that gun access would reduce the risk of rape in such situations.

Research establishes that perpetrators of sexual violence typically use only as much violence as is needed to coerce their victims into submission, instead utilizing psychological weapons such as power, control, manipulation and threats, in addition to alcohol and other drugs, to gain sexual access.<sup>2</sup> To suggest that adding a gun or guns into this scenario would prevent sexual violence from occurring ignores the possibility that a victim's own weapon could be turned against him or her. Defensive use of weapons in close proximity with a known offender is a tactic even the most savvy gun owner might question. If most campus victims don't even cry for help, it is quite a stretch to think very many would ever shoot or threaten to shoot their attacker.

ATIXA firmly opposes concealed carry on college campuses, especially on any unfounded basis that contends that concealed carry would reduce the risk of campus sexual violence.

ATIXA encourages legislators who share our concern about the prevention of sexual violence to focus on methods of primary prevention that have demonstrated effectiveness, instead of twisting the epidemic of campus sexual violence to legitimize the pro-gun agenda.

*ATIXA is a membership association of more than 3,000 college and school administrators whose responsibility is to assure gender equity under federal law.*

<sup>1</sup> Fisher, B., F. Cullen and M. Turner (2000). The Sexual Victimization of College Women. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice; Sampson, R., (2002). Acquaintance Rape of College Students. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice; Krebs, C. P., Lindquist, C. H., Warner, T. D., Fisher, B. S., & Martin, S. L. (2007). The Campus Sexual Assault (CSA) Study. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Justice

<sup>2</sup> Lisak, D., & Miller, P. M. (2002). Repeat Rape And Multiple Offending Among Undetected Rapists. Violence and Victims.