

HO #4

SB100

Sheila Gestring

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Subject: Latest draft

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All,

~~Sheila~~ would like to read a <sup>prepared</sup> statement from the 6 BoR universities

Below is what the 6 Presidents are currently debating. I have one affirmative at the moment. If I hear nothing from the other 4, this is what I will be presenting tomorrow.

*To the Esteemed Members of the Senate State Affairs Committee,*

*As Presidents of the six public universities of the South Dakota Board of Regents, our most fundamental responsibility is the health, safety, and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff. We cannot support SB100 as proposed.*

*We support Second Amendment rights. We also recognize that universities have specific security needs that differ from other public spaces.*

*Our campuses report strong safety records. We are proud of the safe environment our university police departments and local law enforcement provide for our campus communities. While campus carry legislation may provide ~~the~~ greater perception of safety for some, it will create a perception of less security for others. SB100 will change the regular interactions between students, faculty and staff and will impact recruiting and retaining employees.*

*The prospect of campus carry legislation raises concerns for specialized and sensitive research facilities. At Dakota State University two specialized research facilities: the Madison Research Labs, affectionately known as MadLabs, and the Applied Research Lab handle sensitive or classified research activities under strict federal guidelines. To uphold federal accreditation, maintain operational integrity, and protect the validity of ongoing investigations, these facilities would require explicit exemption. Additionally, sensitive research labs such as Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) rooms, often equated to clean rooms, have strict protocols for entry. Introduction of a firearm would contaminate the research. SB100 would not allow campuses to restrict sensitive facilities and jeopardizes significant external funding.*

*A university campus is a place of scholarship, discovery, and personal growth. It is also a community where the free exchange of ideas thrives when students and faculty feel safe to engage, debate, and challenge perspectives without fear or intimidation.*

*We urge you to consider the voices of educators, students, and law enforcement professionals as you deliberate this bill. The university presidents cannot support SB100 as it is currently proposed. ~~As you deliberate on SB100,~~ We respectfully urge modifications that uphold our duty to provide a safe and secure learning environment.*

*We stand ready to work with lawmakers to craft policies that balance constitutional rights with our fundamental responsibility to protect those entrusted to our care.*

*Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to the safety of all South Dakotans.*

**Sheila K. Gestring, MBA CPA** (Inactive)

President

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*Lehi Jeman*