



5575 Simmons, Suite 1-176
North Las Vegas, Nevada 89031
703-373-5935

www.nvfacpac.org
www.facebook.com/nvfacpac

Setting the Record Straight About the 2015 Nevada Legislative Session May 5, 2018

Much misinformation has circulated in the current campaign season about what happened regarding gun rights in the 2015 legislative session. The Nevada Firearms Coalition's PAC (NVFAC-PAC) feels a duty to clear things up and correct the misinformation, so that the voters can know what really happened in that session several years ago.

Going into the 2015 Nevada legislation session, NVFAC-PAC was greatly concerned about the ability of local governments to enact their own gun laws, thus creating a crazy quilt of laws that Nevada's gun owners had to contend with, one example of which was the Clark County "blue card" handgun registration program. This local gun law problem dated back to 1989, when Nevada's initial firearms preemption law (which reserved to the state the right to make gun laws) "grandfathered" existing gun laws at the county and local level, thus allowing them to remain in force. The resulting crazy-quilt of county and local gun laws made changes to the state preemption laws our highest priority for the 2015 session, with the goal of bringing county and local gun laws into conformity with state laws.

NVFAC-PAC worked closely with State Senator Michael Roberson for well over a year in advance of the 2015 session to craft a winning legislative strategy that would protect and enhance the Second Amendment rights of all Nevadans by revising the 1989 preemption law. SB 175 was the fruit of that cooperation. If such a revision could be passed, that crazy-quilt of county and local gun laws could be effectively repealed, and a number of important other things could be achieved, such as elimination of the Clark County "blue cards", extension of the Castle Doctrine, and civil immunity for citizens following a lawful and valid self-defense action. While not related to amending the preemption law, Campus Carry was also a high priority for us. However, politics is the art of the possible. In the event, Campus Carry proved to be a bridge too far for the political environment when it came up for consideration in the State Senate. Even if it passed, we believed it would always be at great risk of being unenforceable if we did not amend the 1989 state preemption law. With that background in mind, here's what happened with Campus Carry.

Campus Carry (AB 148/AB 487) became one of the most emotional and controversial bills of the 2015 legislative session. When the stand-alone Campus Carry AB 148 got into trouble in the Senate, a strong attempt was made to amend AB 148 into SB 175, a bill that was expected to easily pass the Senate, in hopes of breathing new life into Campus Carry and getting it across the legislative finish line. SB 175 happened to be Senator Roberson's mental health bill, which

included our and Senator Roberson's improvements to Nevada's gun laws. Both NVFAC-PAC and Senator Roberson received intense criticism when we opposed efforts to attach AB 148, Campus Carry, onto SB 175. We did so because we believed it would kill both bills. As it happened, AB 148 was amended into SB 175 in the Assembly Judiciary Committee, only to be stripped out when it went to the full Assembly. The Senate had made it clear they did not have the votes to pass the amended bill and would not move it forward. When it came down to the wire, the Assembly majority chose to oppose the Campus Carry amendment so they could pass a bill they knew would be signed by the governor. That done, the stand-alone SB 175, without Campus Carry, was then passed and signed into law by Governor Sandoval. NVFAC-PAC's position was, and is, that attempting to pass SB 175 with Campus Carry attached to it would have been the death of both bills.

Senator Roberson has recently come under fire for killing Campus Carry in the 2015 session. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Campus Carry died in the 2015 session because it could not muster sufficient support on its merits in the Senate to pass out of that chamber and to the Governor's desk. NVFAC-PAC holds Senator Greg Brower and ultimately Governor Brian Sandoval responsible for killing Campus Carry: Senator Brower because he refused to give Campus Carry, along with other pro-2A bills, hearings in his committee; and Governor Sandoval because he let it be known that he would not sign any form of campus carry legislation into law. Senator Brower was tasked with making sure nothing got to the Governor's desk that he didn't want to sign. That's called politics which, like the making of sausage, is often displeasing on close examination.

Nothing we have heard or seen since 2015 has caused us to question the wisdom of the tactical decision to oppose the merger of AB 148 into SB 175. While we greatly regretted the failure of a Campus Carry bill in three consecutive Nevada legislative sessions, seeing Campus Carry become the law of the Silver State remains one of NVFAC-PAC's priorities, and we continue to fight for its passage.

It is not an exaggeration to say that without Senator Michael Roberson, NVFAC-PAC's biggest win of the session would not have occurred. That win was also the biggest victory for the Second Amendment in Nevada's history since the passage of the state's constitution with its strong protection for the citizenry's right to arms. That historic win was Senate Bill 175, which was written, introduced, and managed into law by Senator Roberson. With this one single bill, Nevada's law-abiding gun owners got:

- One uniform firearms law for all of Nevada, and elimination of conflicting county and local gun laws.
- Real teeth with which to enforce firearms preemption against municipalities and counties that might be reluctant to bring their laws in line with the statewide preemption law.
- Civil immunity from lawsuits for lawful self-defense incidents.
- Castle Doctrine extension to motor vehicles.
- The immediate end of Clark County's handgun registration program, and the destruction of handgun registration records in Clark County one year after the law's passage.

- Expansion of CCW reciprocity for anyone who is 21 years old and has a CCW permit from another jurisdiction that requires a test, training program, or class. Thanks to that change in the law, Nevada holders of a Concealed Firearms Permit can now legally carry a firearm in 30 other states in the Union, in addition to Nevada.

Michael Roberson's *bona fides* on the Second Amendment are well established and well known to law-abiding gun owners in Nevada. Rather than blaming him for the failure of the campus carry bill in 2015, of which he is innocent, he should be thanked and lauded for the important part he played in the passage of major legislation protecting the rights of every law-abiding citizen in the Silver State.

Don Turner

President, NVFAC-PAC