



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
February 12, 2015

**CONTACT: Oscar Silva**  
915.351.3500 (o) // 915.346.5883 (m)

## **Senator José Rodríguez leads opposition to gun proliferation**

***“It’s quite simple. We don’t need more guns in more places.”***

Austin -- Senator José Rodríguez, Chairman of the Senate Hispanic Caucus, issued the following statement regarding the "campus carry" (Senate Bill 11) and "open carry" (Senate Bill 17) legislation heard in the Senate Committee on State Affairs:

*"The Senate Committee on State Affairs considers today two proposals that would allow for the carrying of a handgun in full view in public (S.B. 17) and broaden the right to carry a concealed handgun on a college campus (S.B. 11). Let us make one thing clear from the outset: the Second Amendment is not at stake here. Texas gun owners already have the right to carry a concealed handgun in most public spaces. This is not about taking people's guns away, but rather about reasonable regulations regarding gun possession in public. I am deeply concerned that the bills proposed today would greatly expand the reach of handguns in the public sphere without doing enough to protect the public by keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and other violent elements.*

*"College campuses are for learning, and those responsible for the education and safety of our students are telling us these proposals simply do not make sense. More than that, our colleges and universities are imploring lawmakers to make good on their promises to uphold the principle of local control; let public colleges and universities decide for themselves if it's appropriate to allow the carrying of handguns on their individual college campuses.*

*"UT System Chancellor Retired Admiral William McRaven, who knows a thing or two about weapons, wrote to lawmakers informing them of his concern that passing legislation allowing guns on campus would make universities less safe. In the letter, he cited concerns about a rise in self-inflicted wounds from students experiencing emotional distress, the challenge of storing*

*weapons in high-density campus housing, and the ability of police to differentiate between the aggressor and the victim in a confrontation where both have guns.*

*"I share Chancellor McRaven's concerns, which are echoed by a number of organizations representing law enforcement, universities, faculty and students, and mental health and children's advocates.*

*"The fact is an overwhelming majority of Texans oppose weakening our gun control laws, which have helped keep our state safer. This is borne out by polling conducted by University of Texas and the Texas Tribune, which found that almost 80 percent of Texans supported basic background checks on all gun sales. Only 16 percent thought it should be easier to own a gun.*

*"It is possible to protect responsible gun ownership without sacrificing public safety. These two proposals fall far from that mark."*

*\*\*\**

*José Rodríguez represents Texas Senate District 29, which includes the counties of El Paso, Hudspeth, Culberson, Jeff Davis, and Presidio. He represents both urban and rural constituencies, and more than 350 miles of the Texas-Mexico border. Senator Rodríguez currently serves as the Chairman of the Senate Hispanic Caucus, and a member of the Senate Committees on Education; Health and Human Services; Veteran Affairs and Military Installations; Nominations; and Agriculture, Water, and Rural Affairs.*