

Good afternoon. My name is Francie King. I'm a volunteer with Ohio Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. I live in Grove City. My husband grew up in Shreve, Ohio. He is a gun owner and a hunter since he was a child. I have been to all six of the previous hearings on this bill and have listened to dozens of people talk about why this bill is a dangerous and wrongheaded move for the Ohio legislature. That we are here again, just 4 days after 10 people were killed and 13 injured in Santa Fe High School is shocking.

We should be confronting this problem of gun violence in America and not accommodating it by loosening our gun laws. Moms Demand Action was here last week to advocate for several bills that would do just that. I hope this committee finally sees that HB 228 will do nothing to promote public safety, or to help prevent the gun violence that is ravaging our communities, schools, churches, and homes, killing 96 people each and every day.

The 2 main components of HB 228 – permitless carry and Stand Your Ground - have shown to be detrimental to public safety. In states where this type of legislation has been enacted, gun violence has increased, not decreased.

First, HB 228 would effectively allow people to carry hidden, loaded handguns in public without a permit or safety training. Eliminating Ohio's concealed carry permit requirement would lower the bar for who may carry handguns in public in Ohio and would make it easy for individuals to carry loaded handguns in crowded town centers and on city streets. Ohioans know that criminal background checks and training are essential when carrying in public. A recent poll showed that 90% of Ohio voters support the current system, which requires a permit to carry concealed handguns.

Permitless carry has shown to have a detrimental effect on public safety in Missouri and Arizona. After Missouri enacted permitless carry in January 2017, the city of St. Louis has experienced a 23% increase in aggravated assaults with a gun in 2017 over the total in 2016. This represents an additional 484 gun-related assaults in St. Louis City alone in 2017 than in 2016. Since Arizona enacted permitless carry in 2010, the annual total of aggravated assaults committed with a firearm increased by 44%. Don't let this happen in Ohio.

Second, the Stand Your Ground portion of this bill is equally egregious. In the six other hearings I been to, I have yet to hear any reason given for the state of Ohio to allow people to shoot to kill in public, instead of simply walking away from a dangerous situation when it is safe to do so.

Taking a life is the most serious action anyone can take and to encourage it by passing this bill is unconscionable. People should be able to defend themselves, and under current Ohio law they can already do that. But in states where stand your ground is the law, statistics show that the murder rate rises after the law is passed. A 2012 study by researchers at Texas A&M found that in 21 states Stand Your Ground laws are associated with a clear increase in homicides, resulting in 600 more homicides per year. I urge you all to take a hard look at what this bill would do and listen to the law enforcement groups who have spoken out against this dangerous bill.

In conclusion, our nation has already suffered too much because of a lack of common sense gun laws. Don't continue down this path of loosening our guns laws. Vote no on HB 228.