



Chairwoman Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Holmes, and members of the State and Local Government Committee, and Governor Kasich, thank you for allowing me to speak today on HB 585 and to tell you my story.

I am not an Ohio resident, but I do have a lot of family in Ohio to include my parents, my sister, my brother in law, my 3 nephews and all of the extended family. It is safe to say that I love a lot of people in Ohio. I have been coming here for the better part of 30 years to visit my extended family and I consider Ohio my second home. The health and well being of my loved ones here matters deeply to me.

I was also the father of Jaime Guttenberg who was 14 and Jesse Guttenberg who is 17. Unfortunately, Jaime is dead. She was murdered in her Parkland High School on February 14th. I sent both of my kids to school this day as I would any other day and only one of them came home. Towards the end of the day, I received the phone call that will be with me for the rest of my life. My son called to say there was an active shooter at the school and he was running. He was panicking as he heard the bullets in the 1200 building where my daughter was murdered. He heard the bullets that killed his sister. Thankfully, he made it to safety. My wife and I tried for hours to find our daughter. At about 6pm, one of my best friends, who is a Coral Springs SWAT officer was on the scene. He loved my daughter like she was part of his family. He found my daughter and called me as I was driving back from the hospital on my search for her. My wife and I were in two cars and she was in front of me. She could see in her rearview mirror that something was wrong. She called wanting to know what was happening. I did not want to tell her while we were driving. She demanded and so we pulled over to the side of the highway. It was on the side of the highway that I had to tell my wife that our daughter was murdered at school. She was either the last or second to last of the victims to get shot in the school. She was running and made it to the stairwell on the other side of the hallway. One more second, and she makes it. Unfortunately, a single shot to her side and BOOM, her spinal cord was severed. Did she die instantly, or did she suffer? I will never know but I spend every second of my day thinking about it and tortured by the idea that she was alive and paralyzed by the damage caused by this AR 15 bullet, and not able to tell anyone. I was never part of any movement before this, but I am now. At her funeral, I promised I would be her voice and fight for her. I have heard the delusional lie that any other weapon could have been used. WRONG!!! A car could not drive through the school and a knife or hand gun would never have made it to the 3rd floor, let alone cause the physical damage to the bodies that killed so many including my daughter.

I see many in this room that I assume are parents. We all have dreams for our children. I dreamt of watching my daughter have her first boyfriend, her first job, graduating high school

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and college. Most, I dreamt of walking her down the aisle at her wedding and becoming a grand parent to her children. Those dreams are terminated. My daughter will be 14 forever. For those of you with children, imagine this happening to one of your kids. It definitely can. I live in a beautiful neighborhood. I live in a neighborhood with almost no crime. I live in the neighborhood that makes people say, not in my neighborhood. WRONG!!! It happened in my neighborhood.

Make no mistake, your schools and other public buildings are not free from potential gun fire. I have visited schools here. There are multiple points of entry and it is easy for anyone, with the intent of causing mass casualties, to walk in with a back pack containing an AR 15 like the one that killed my daughter. Unfortunately, this can happen in any public building.

To be clear, my new mission for common sense gun safety will succeed. Ohio has the opportunity to help lead. The reason I am certain of that is that there is nothing in it that alienates any 2nd amendment rights. Hopefully, you all also agree that no right should overtake another right. My daughter and the other victims of preventable gun violence had all of their rights terminated. They lost their right to life. They lost their right to be believers in the 2nd amendment. In the bill before you today, nothing will change for law abiding gun owners and I support that. I support law abiding gun owners and nothing should change for them. To anyone who would suggest that common sense gun reforms such as the ones which we passed in Florida alienate the 2nd amendment is dishonest. No law abiding gun owner has had weapons removed or restrictions placed on use. The law simply gives law enforcement the ability to protect others who may become victims of preventable gun violence if nothing is done. I have been the recipient of some brutal and vulgar and threatening comments from those who do not support this. For me, this is not partisan, but it is about loss and honoring the memory of my daughter. For those who make the threatening comments, they only reinforce how important it is that we do something. What our suggested reforms will do is lead to enhanced public safety from individuals who intend to use guns to kill others, so that the citizens of this state can have greater confidence that they will not be shot, simply for going to school or for being out and enjoying your beautiful public parks, shopping malls, movie theaters, places of worship and other public buildings.

You have in front of you right now HB 585. You must pass this bill. The similar law in Florida which we call the Red Flag Law is working. Had this law been in place prior to February 14th, the weapons used by my daughter's killer would have been confiscated and the mass casualties prevented. Had this law been in place, my daughter and 16 others would likely be alive today. Even if her murderer chose a less lethal option, he never makes it to the 2nd and 3rd floor. My daughter who was possibly the last to be shot, would be alive today. Two weeks after Red Flag Laws were passed in Florida, at a high school 10 minutes from where my daughter was

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murdered in Coral Springs, another on line threat appeared. The police investigated and found a house full of lethal weapons. They were able to act and not only arrest the student but also remove the weapons. This law prevented another mass casualty tragedy from happening around the corner from Parkland. There have been over 50 instances where this law has now been used since its passage in early March. The good news is that the due process portion is working as well, and some have gotten their weapons back.

The law in front of you today is simply intended to keep weapons from those who intend to do harm. This law is intended to keep you, your family, your friends, your neighbors and fellow citizens from becoming the next victim of a mass casualty because law enforcement did not have the necessary tools to stop a known threat. You must be strong, you must be honest about what this law does, you must continue to support the 2nd amendment and ensure that everyone has the right to live a life where they can enjoy all of our constitutionally guaranteed rights. You must pass this bill.

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