

## Shelli Sharp's Testimony

May 1, 2019

### WRITTEN & SPOKEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 178

My name is Shelli Sharp. I am a registered voter in Ross County. This is not my first time testifying concerning my 2nd Amendment Right and it is unlikely to be the last time. As it is early in this bill's life, I want to explain my experience as citizen, mother, daughter, and woman so you know who you represent and why it is important for you to pass this bill.

As a US Citizen, I am afforded the right to defend myself by the US Constitution. While I feel that a state law which allows "Constitutional Carry" is an oxymoron, I find that in this political climate, it is necessary.

As a mother, I know what it's like to fear for my children and to want to protect them from harm. The stories of my daughter and son are theirs to tell, but I stand before you, with the distinct misfortune of knowing what it's like to be completely powerless in my protective desires. My babies have experienced violence, and I have agonized over their pain and grief while recovering from it. The people responsible for my children's experiences broke laws intended to protect my children in my absence. Criminals don't obey laws.

As a daughter, I learned from my father and father-in-law all about the handling and use of firearms. I have fond memories of target practice with my dad's .22 rifle, and of the kick of my father-in-law's 30-.06.

Barely 5 years after my father-in-law picked me up off the ground - my ego more bruised than my shoulder - my mother showed up to my work with news that shattered my heart. My father-in-law was dead, along with his brother. They had both been shot in the head.

The woman responsible had documented mental conditions which would preclude her from owning a gun. Yet, she had a gun. Criminals don't obey laws.

Probably the most harrowing experience of my life was when I was forced out of my car and into my home at knife-point by a drunk attacker. Held hostage for 15 hours, stripped, raped, beaten, choked, kicked, I regained consciousness and found my attacker passed out. His finger was on the trigger of a loaded gun. The safety was off. I had broken bones, countless bruises, and patches of missing hair on my head. I took the gun and unloaded it before I escaped to a hospital.

I have been asked, "Why didn't you shoot him?" Quite simply: his life wasn't mine to take. He would not have passed a criminal background check. Yet, he had a gun. Criminals don't obey laws.

I am a voter with real experiences of gun violence. Yet I still believe in my Constitutional right to keep and bear arms. I still believe that right shall not be infringed. I so strongly believe in that right, that I vehemently oppose ALL forms of infringement, including licensing, forms, registration, permits, etc. According to the Constitution, I may keep and bear arms. Period.

I know that criminals do not obey laws. I hope that hearing my testimony will drive that fact home for this committee, and anyone who hears it. It is a result of all that I've experienced as a citizen, mother, daughter, and woman, that I urge you to pass HB 178, and ensure Ohioans' Constitutional right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.