

House Federalism Committee  
Wednesday, May 22, 2019  
House Bill 178  
Opponent Testimony

My name is Phyllis Carlson-Riehm and I represent ACTION OHIO Coalition For Battered Women, a statewide domestic violence coalition. ACTION OHIO's Mission is to promote quality programs, services and resources to survivors of domestic violence. ACTION OHIO's ultimate vision is the elimination of violence.

Domestic Violence is all about Power and Control – Power over every waking hour of the Victim's Life and Control over all of the Victim's Thoughts and Actions. Many times the Abuser's gaining Total Control is a gradual process in the relationship and the influence of the Abuser is sometimes misinterpreted as Concern for the Victim's Well Being. A Victim may feel that the Abuser is looking out for her, that he seeks to protect her from harm. After the Takeover is complete, the Victim's Thoughts, Feelings and Actions are no longer her own. Her Willpower is gone and the Abuser's Look alone will enforce his commands.

Guns and other deadly weapons are often used as emphasis if the Victim seeks to resist and think for herself. Many victims will reveal to advocates that they have been pistol whipped and had a gun held to their head on many occasions. The Abuser makes it perfectly clear that he can and will commit homicide if the Victim fails to meet his needs for Control.

ACTION OHIO remains opposed to laws and legislation that permit the liberalization of gun laws that make it possible for young adults who don't have the benefit of mature brain development to have occurred or for individuals with a history of violent or irrational and unstable behavior to purchase, possess and conceal deadly weapons, particularly guns. Guns provide the means to kill instantly, and with little physical force, or in close proximity to the Victim, or with little or no forethought or preparation. If death is not instantaneous, the Victim could be mortally wounded, disabled for life and facing years of great suffering leading to eventual death.

The facts are:

- In this country, more than 1 in 3 women report experiencing abuse from a partner in their lifetime.
- Domestic violence impacts families, especially children, communities & our economy.
- The nexus between guns & domestic violence makes the U.S. the most dangerous country for women compared to other high-income countries.
- 92% of all women killed with guns in high-income countries in 2015 were from the U.S.
- In an average month, at least 52 American women are shot & killed by an intimate partner.
- Most mass shootings in the U.S. are related to domestic or family violence.
- Research has shown that common-sense laws that keep guns out of the hands of domestic violence abusers reduce gun violence and saves lives.

Continued

With the passage of HB 178:

- Many more weapons with killing potential can be carried concealed.
- Law enforcement officers will be at a disadvantage because they won't know who is carrying lethal weapons.
- 21 year-olds and up may carry concealed in spite of the fact that the human brain is not considered fully mature & capable of wisest decision-making until at least age 25.
- 21 year-olds and up may carry concealed in spite of the fact that they have been charged with a misdemeanor or felony offense (but not yet convicted) for homicide, domestic violence or violating a protection order.
- Requirements established for concealed carry, to ensure some degree of safety for others (a common-sense gun safety measure), are eliminated!
- Known domestic violence abusers will be permitted to expunge convictions of failure to comply with notification requirements! - which indicates greater risk for the lives and well being of their victims and their children, as well as others who risk becoming collateral damage in a killing spree.

Passage of HB 178 will increase risks for all residents in Ohio, but especially for domestic violence victims, their children, and their extended family members. **Please do NOT support passage of this bill.**

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