

The Honorable John Becker
Chairperson, Federalism Committee
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: Opposition to HB 178, the “Permitless Carry” bill

Dear Representative Becker and Members of the Committee,

My name is Marja Lasek-Martin. I am a Toledo resident who opposes House Bill 178. Here is why I think the bill is a bad idea.

Allowing people to carry concealed firearms in public without safety training, is not smart. I shot my first shot gun at a skeet shooting event years ago. I can still remember “the kick” that the gun gave, and it nearly threw me to the ground. It was powerful enough that my shoulder was black and blue and aching days later. I have participated in a number of such events over the years. Each time I was supervised by a trained and certified instructor. I can’t imagine undertaking such an activity without proper supervision or instruction and I certainly don't think I should be carrying a concealed gun in public, despite my experience with firearms. Removing the training requirement under this legislation will lead to an increase in the amount of accidental deaths and shootings and aggravated assaults.¹

The level of gun violence in our country is uniquely an American problem. It has become common place for mass shootings to occur in our schools, in our churches, and in our communities.

¹In 2003, Alaska become the first state to enact permit less carry legislation. Aggravated assaults committed by firearms have increased since the law went into effect. Since 2003, the rate of aggravated assaults committed with a firearm in the state **increased by 82 percent** by 2017. That increase represents 526 more gun-related aggravated assaults committed in 2017 than in 2003. This information is calculated from the Crime Reported in Alaska 2003 and 2017. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Public Safety, Statewide Services. Rates were calculated using population data from the United States Census Bureau.

This bill would allow more people—people who are not willing to pass a background check or take eight hours of training—to carry firearms in public places. Those individuals are unlikely to help the decrease of gun violence, however much they are a "good guy with a gun"—we know how rare such circumstances are, because of the extremely high level of training it would require to shoot an assailant with a gun—and are far more likely to increase it, as we have seen in states like Alaska and Arizona. ²

Further, gun violence is expensive. It is a drain on the taxpayer and the state's economy. Based upon a study done by "Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence³" in 2015, the price tag of gun violence in Ohio was more than \$2.7 billion. This figure includes:

- Healthcare costs - \$125 million
- Cost to Employers - \$16 million
- Police and judicial costs - \$227 million
- Loss of income - \$2.5 billion

These are figures which can be measured. The cost of gun violence which is difficult to quantify would push this figure higher in terms of social costs to neighborhoods and lost business opportunities, etc.

Due to the nature of gun violence, taxpayers are forced to directly shoulder a large amount of the overall cost—in Ohio, more than \$540 million in 2015. This is because:

- Up to 85% of gunshot victims are either uninsured or on some form of state-funded insurance.
- Law enforcement efforts are funded entirely by taxpayer dollars. I would also remind the committee that law enforcement oppose this bill.

² Since Arizona enacted permitless carry legislation in 2010, the rate of aggravated assaults committed with a firearm in the state **increased by 39 percent** by 2017. That increase represents 1,797 more gun related aggravated assaults committed in 2017 than in 2010. Crime in Arizona, 2010 and 2017. Phoenix, Arizona: Arizona Department of Public Safety. Rates were calculated using population data from the United States Census Bureau.

³ "The Economic Cost of Gun Violence in Ohio: A Business Case for Action" by Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, 2017

As the evidence from other states has shown, House Bill 178, if enacted, would lead to an increase in gun violence, then it will also lead to increased gun violence-related costs.

For the reasons set out above, I would request that the committee reject House Bill 178. Thank you for your time.

Marja Lasek-Martin