

Chair Becker, Vice Chair Stotzfus, ranking member Miller and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony on House Bill 178. My name is Sr. Barbara Kane and I am speaking to you as the Justice Promotor of the Dominican Sisters of Peace. We are a national religious congregation with 400 religious sisters and over 600 lay men and women who work with us in our ministries and in our justice work. In Ohio, we have over 450 sisters and associates.

We are against Bill 178 that would allow any person not prohibited by federal law to carry a concealed deadly weapon without needing a special license and removing the requirement to inform law enforcement that they have a gun in their car when stopped.

As I have watched and read the testimony for this bill, it seems to me that what the arguments boil down to is that both sides have a deep need to feel safe. Safety is the second level on Maslow's hierarchy of needs right above food, clean air and water, and rest. Those in favor of H.B. 178 believe that carrying a gun will make them safe; but carrying their guns without others knowing about it will make them safer. They believe that not telling the police that they have a gun when pulled over, will make them safer. They want to feel safe.

My religious sisters and I also want to feel safe. We do not want to be in a room with someone carrying a gun unless there is a specific purpose like hunting or sport shooting. If we know someone has a gun, we can choose to move away from that person. So we would feel safer a person keeps his/her gun in their own house or if they exercise their current right to open carry. If a person needs a gun to feel safe, wear it and let us know so we can make an informed decision about being in the same room/area with them.

Do the police have a right to feel safe when they approach a car? Won't knowing that there is a gun in the car at least give them the information they need to act appropriately? Is it safer for them not to know that a gun is present? We spend millions of dollars each year for our police and public safety department to make neighborhoods and communities safe. But with this new legislation, we risk putting these individuals in more danger by allowing anyone to carry a gun and not tell the police that they have one.

I know that all the legislators here in this building are concerned about their safety and the safety of their staffs and the public because you don't allow guns, concealed or otherwise, in this building or in the Riffe Center. You ensure your safety by having State Police at every entrance and a metal detector that can identify a weapon that could put you in danger. I respect that you want to be safe. My Dominican sisters and I want the same level of safety where we are.

We are not alone either. A March 10, 2014 poll of Illinois citizens concluded that 52.3% of the public felt less safe after the passage of a law allowing citizens to carry concealed weapons in public. An April 2010 poll of registered voters across the U.S. found that 57% felt less safe when learning that others could be carrying concealed weapons. College students at 15

colleges stated that 79% would not feel safe if faculty, students, or visitors could carry concealed weapons on campus. <https://concealedguns.procon.org/>

According to the Violence Policy Center, since 2007, 1,119 deaths not involving self-defense including 31 mass shootings and the killing of 21 law enforcement officers have been committed by concealed-carry gun owners. 47 in Ohio. Perhaps if these individuals had been openly carrying, those killed could have moved to a safer place.

So whose right to feel safe is more important? Gun owners who make up less than 20% of Ohio citizens? Police? Legislators? People like me and our sisters and associates? The rest of the public? That is what you must decide when you implement this legislation. Hopefully you will decide in favor of the majority.