

Today I'm speaking as a concerned citizen in opposition to HB 178. I'm a retired R.N. whose forty -five-year career included working twenty-five years in a Level I Trauma Center E.R. night shift and ten years in a hospice inpatient unit. I've witnessed the difference in the grieving process of sudden vs expected death. But then I began to see a third grieving process when senseless/preventable gun deaths began to tick up. Those survivors' lives are impacted more severely- many careers are ended to take up gun violence activism because they at least want the loss of their loved one to stand for something. And try to prevent anyone else from experiencing the on- going, unimaginable pain they themselves live with daily. Examples are the Sandy Hook parents. A closer example is a shooting survivor from the Fountain Square shooting in Cincinnati. She was a VP at 5/3rd bank and has recently left that position to manage her organization to end gun violence that she began after her ordeal. She is a Republican, gun owner. It's troubling that your actions seem to indicate that you're more influenced by organizations whose main goal is to sell more guns instead of choosing to believe many years of research into gun violence and measures that work to reduce it. This committee has reams of data from researchers, who aren't selling anything, that have been submitted by others who have previously testified yet you choose to ignore it.

Everyone in the room strives for safer communities and it is just baffling how opposite the solutions are. In the past when there was a public health issue that needed solving the approach was quite different. Addressing deaths from MVC's (motor vehicle crashes) Instead of accepting that MVC's were just a risk of driving through research found ways to reduce deaths – seat belts, air bags, child safety seats etc. Licensing new drivers is more comprehensive than previously so more instruction is required prior to obtaining a driver's license.

Even something as common as reducing severe injuries from bicycle accidents by wearing helmets which has been proven through research is an example.

If more guns in our society was the solution to the public health issue of gun violence the US should be the safest place to live and that is not the case. Industrialized nations similar to ours also experience hatred, domestic violence and violent individuals but have fewer gun deaths than the U.S. I hesitate to use the mental health issue because the majority of individuals with a mental health diagnosis are not violent.

Think about this- there are more privately-owned guns in the U.S. than there are citizens.

I would much prefer to see legislators focus on Trauma Recovery Centers which can deal with many of the social/medical issues which lead to violence in our communities rather than promote more guns and reduced permitting and training qualifications for gun owners. Hurt people hurt people and until dealt with realistically the violence will continue.

Jill Bowman