

Chairman Manning, Vice-Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Maharath and members of the Senate Local Government, Public Safety, and Veterans Affairs Committee, my name is Annette Lazenby and I have been a Certified Infant Swimming Resource (ISR) Instructor for over 3 years. I completed a six week training course in Fort Myers Florida to become a Certified ISR Instructor. This included over 4 hours of daily pool instruction. In addition, I had to complete extensive education in Physiology, Psychology and Sensory Learning. I teach little ones 6 months old through 6 years old to Self-Rescue with our Swim Float Swim sequence (6-12 months only learn the Roll Back to Float).

I have been teaching ISR in my private indoor pool since I became Certified in 2017. In addition to all the other ISR Protocols and Procedures, I also follow the ISR protocols for Pool Sanitation (attached).

On April 6th after I completed my morning ISR lessons and following the updated ISR Protocols for lessons due to COVID19 (see photo attached of what an ISR lesson looked like in my pool), I received a call from Lana Glore from Wood County Environmental Health. She told me someone reported me for breaking Social Distancing. I informed her I was following ISR protocols that were approved by the CDC. Her next question brought me to my knees. Are you accepting money for these lessons? When I replied, "yes", she informed me to "Cease and Desist All Illegal Activity in my pool". This was followed by a letter stating the same and referenced Mary Shaffer from Ohio Health Recreational Programs.

I asked if she was permanently shutting down my business and she said yes. She said "you are operating as a public pool in a private residence since you are taking money. You will need to get licensed as a public pool and that will never happen or get approved".

After some of the shock wore off, I began to investigate how I could comply with the State to be able to teach little ones to save their lives in a water emergency. I was given the number for Mary Shaffer from Ohio Health Recreation; she was my first call. She again said I most likely won't become a licensed public pool. But she referred me to the Ohio Engineers who would approve it. They referred me to an Engineer in Dayton. It was becoming apparent that it was going to be technically complex.

Feeling stuck I reached out to my swim parents that follow me on Facebook and Instagram (around 1400) and asked them to reach out to Senator Theresa Gavarone and Representative Haraz Ghanbari. My parents, who are concerned for their children's safety, rallied with passion!

That began my conversations with Senator Gavarone and Representative Ghanbari. They both understand the critical NEED for these lessons. I spent hours with Senator Gavarone explaining ISR, and all our Protocols. I also explained the Medical Protocols and Procedure that we have. A Registration Evaluation Team (RET) must approve each child. I cannot put a child in the water until the medical team from RET approves that child. That team follows the child through lessons if any medical issues occur or if they are a special needs child. I also must send in video clips of lessons to confirm progression.

One of the MOST important points I want to stress is I do not just teach swimming; I teach Self Rescue. Every child that I teach will be able to Self Rescue in a water emergency, AND be able to Self Rescue in summer and winter clothes. Drowning is the #1 cause of death in children under 4 and #2 for children 5-12. 83% of all water emergencies happen fully clothed. Let me say that again so it can sink in. 83% of all water emergencies happen fully clothed.

With ISR lessons stopped, the parents are going to resort to unsafe practices they think will keep their child safe. They will put them in Puddle Jumpers, Floaties, or Life Vests. This is the MOST dangerous thing they can do. To be direct, they all teach the child Drowning Posture. In a water emergency, they will go to the posture they see as "safe" – head up and feet down. They will quickly and quietly go under water and take in water. In ISR lessons I teach the child breath control and horizontal water orientation versus vertical orientation.

Next, I want to address Public versus Private pools. It is true that some Instructors teach in Public pools but it is not optimal and not always an option. I did travel teach for 3 years in a Assisted Living Home in Bluffton. Each year, more and more parents wanted to take advantage of my lessons there. But each year I was given less and less pool time. Thus, I had to turn parents away. My last year became such a struggle with the Administration that I informed the families I could not teach there anymore. Besides the Administration issues, there were also issues with the lighting and pool environment.

I also had over 30 families in the Findlay area reach out for me to travel there to teach. I worked for 6 months trying to secure a pool. I had a swim parent connected to the hotels in Findlay try to reach out. I had another swim parent even do a presentation at a Rehabilitation Center. The answer was a consistent – NO.

Until April 6th, I taught year-round exclusively in my indoor pool in Perrysburg. I have attached a picture of the pool that was taken March 30th. I was following the ISR protocols that were issued March 17th (the protocols are even stricter today - attached) to allow for social distancing. You can see it is only one parent and one child and I in the pool.

You can also see from this picture that the pool is a welcoming environment for the children. This setting is actually optimal for my ISR lessons. When the child enters, they see a bright, fun, inviting area and hear calming music playing in the background. To some, a large public pool is intimidating. To others, a large public pool offers too many distractions. I teach many special needs children – Downs Syndrome, Autistic, Non-verbal Autistic, Duchennes Muscular Dystrophy, Apraxia, ADHD, High Anxiety,... My swim parents appreciate having that secluded quiet environment for their baby/child.

Besides the warmth of the environment, having the pool at my residence allows me to control of the pool temperature and chemicals. I can assure that I am meeting the ISR Protocols for Pool Sanitation. I personally test the pool chemicals 4 times a day. I want it the best for my little ones. And, to be honest, I am standing in it for up to 6 hours per day, so I want to make sure the chemicals are correct.

After May 26th, considering public pools for lessons is even less of an option. USA Swim Teams as well as local swim clubs will be occupying all the public pools with their new USA Swimming Requirements. Swim teams used to utilize pools 5-6 hours for practice. Now it is one swimmer per lane, so they are now using the pools for 15-16 hours a day. I know this because our youngest is a competitive swimmer for USA Swimming; we were issued the new pool schedule.

When you are voting on this Bill, I ask you to remember these key points:

- Drowning is the #1 Cause of death in children 0-4
- Several of my students have self-rescued after my lessons in a water emergency
- Pools are now open in Ohio; we will match Florida's statistics if this Bill fails (please refer to the letter from JoAnn Barnett, President of ISR).
- By passing this Bill, YOU have the opportunity to save a child's life

Do you have a child or Grandchild that is 6 or under? Could they rescue themselves in full winter clothes if you threw them in the middle of a deep body of water. My students can (see pictures). Please pass this Bill so I and other ISR Instructors in Ohio can teach these life saving skills. Passing this bill will help SO NOT ONE MORE CHILD DROWNS in our State. I ask that this Bill, SB 309, get Voted on and Passed As Soon As Possible. We can be PROACTIVE now, versus passing the Bill after a child drowns.

Thank you for your time, and I would be happy to answer any questions.