

Sarah Mouncey
Opponent Testimony – Ohio House Bill 201

Good afternoon Chairwoman Roegner and committee members, thank you for having me today. My name is Sarah Mouncey and I am a volunteer with the Columbus Chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. We are a non-partisan group that advocates for gun violence prevention and responsible gun ownership.

I joined Moms Demand Action because I have seen firsthand the effects gun violence has on people. One of my college friends attended Columbine High School during the mass shooting there and she had severe PTSD from this terrifying event. I also knew someone who was killed in the Aurora movie theater shooting and know someone else whose daughter was also killed there. These connections to gun violence are too close for comfort for me and my family. Fighting for common sense gun laws is the one thing I can do to make sure I don't know anyone else who has to deal with the pain and loss that comes with gun violence.

Unfortunately, I'm here today to oppose a bill that will do nothing to reduce gun violence and I urge this committee to vote no on HB 201. Simply put, HB 201 is not conducive to public safety. It eliminates training requirements and lowers the bar for those allowed to carry concealed handguns in public, which puts public safety at risk. This bill will also make law enforcement's job harder.

I am not alone in this sentiment. Recent polling has also revealed that a majority of Ohioans are opposed to "permitless carry" bills like HB 201. When asked about the prospect of permitless concealed carry, 73% of Ohioans opposed this. When asked about the current system--which requires anyone who carries a concealed handgun in public to have a clean criminal record and complete a handgun safety training course--90% of voters said they support it.

This bill would also allow people with dangerous histories to carry hidden, loaded handguns in public. If enacted, certain violent criminals and drug offenders would be legally allowed to carry concealed handguns in public, making the job of law enforcement harder and more dangerous.

If enacted, HB 201 would pose a risk to Ohioans out in public, whether it's buying groceries or bringing our kids to the park. Allowing hidden, loaded handguns in public in the hands of people with no training and no criminal background check is not what the majority of Ohio voters think of when they think of public safety.

I appreciate the time you have taken to listen to me today. Please vote NO on HB 201. It is too dangerous for Ohio.