

My name is Michele Mueller. I'm a volunteer with Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. I'm here today to urge you to vote NO on HB 233.

Often, the premise for bills like this one is that so called "Gun Free Zones" are dangerous and they cause mass shootings. But, this is just a myth told by the gun lobby to put more guns in more places – no questions asked. There is no evidence to support this claim.

Here is the evidence on mass shootings: Of 156 mass shootings identified between 2009 and 2016, no more than 10 percent (16 shootings) took place wholly in public spaces where guns were prohibited. The vast majority-- **63 percent**--of mass shootings occurred wholly in private homes.

Shooters in these situations do not consider where and when to commit murder based on whether others will be carrying a gun. They are largely the result of domestic violence situations or workplace confrontations, and do not target a place because of a so-called "Gun Free Zone."

What concerns me most about HB 233 as a parent and grandparent, is that if enacted, this bill would allow guns in K-12 schools. Allowing guns in schools puts children and educators at risk and does not increase their safety. Schools are already generally very safe. Only 1% of school-age homicides have ever taken place on school grounds, on the way to and from schools, or during a school sponsored event. Additionally, school safety experts have issued warnings that civilians with guns in schools is NOT a sound security procedure.

While schools are safe places for our children, we know that violence does occur. Unfortunately, there have been 113 school shootings since 2013. Of these shootings, 1 in 6 started as a verbal altercation that became deadly because of a gun. If Ohio legislature decides to allow guns onto K-12 schools, they increase the risk of even more relatively harmless altercations becoming deadly with the presence of a gun.

Another issue to consider when you allow guns in k-12 schools is unintentional shootings. Of those 113 school shootings, 10% of them were unintentional shootings that occurred because of mishandling or neglectful storage of a firearm. If HB 233 passes, it will increase the risk of unintentional injury or death in our schools and do nothing to increase safety.

In closing, there is no evidence that this bill will make us or our schools safer, reduce mass shootings, or result in a downturn in gun violence. This committee should look at the evidence and not rely on a gun lobby myth and scare tactics to influence public policy. I once again urge you to vote no on HB 233.

Thank you.