My name is Judith Robinson. I’m the volunteer for Ohio Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. Moms Demand Action is a grassroots organization that fights every day for common sense gun laws and to save lives cut short by gun violence. I am happy to be here today to testify in favor of SB 278.

This bill will create a life-saving Red Flag law in Ohio. Eight states, most recently Maryland, Florida, and Vermont, have passed Red Flag Laws and bills to create red flag laws have been active in at least 29 states and D.C. this year. This is not a partisan issue nor is it a controversial one.  Ohio has a chance to be a leader in gun violence prevention by enacting this law.

Red flag laws empower law enforcement and family members--who are often the first to recognize warning signs that a person poses a threat--to petition a court for an extreme risk protection order. This is an order that temporarily restricts a person’s access to firearms if they pose a risk of using them to harm themselves or others. If enacted, this bill will help address the epidemic of mass shootings. In nearly 42 percent of mass shooting incidents, the attacker exhibited dangerous warning signs before the shooting that a Red Flag law could have addressed.

This bill will also address the epidemic of firearm suicide, which accounts for over 2/3s of firearm deaths in the US. Reducing a suicidal person’s access to firearms can save their life. Suicide by firearm is fatal 90% of the time, whereas suicide by other methods is only fatal 10% of the time. A 2017 study of Connecticut’s Red Flag Law found that the law has already averted an estimated 72 suicides. In Ohio, someone dies by firearm suicide every 11 hours. Think of how many lives we could save with a bill like this.

Additionally, this Red flag bill also has robust due process protections, which help to ensure that the rights of all parties involved are being respected while we work to reduce gun violence in our communities.

Thank you for your time and I urge this committee to vote yes on SB 278.