**Neil Moore:**

Good Morning. My name is Neil Moore and I live in Fairfield, OH. I’m a volunteer with Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. I am also a husband, father of three adult children and grandfather of three young grandchildren. As with most people, I am concerned about the safety of my family from possible gun violence. I am a veteran of the U.S. Navy and have owned guns my whole adult life and understand the great responsibility for safe handling and use of guns.

Thank you for allowing me time today to discuss this dangerous piece of legislation. SB180 and HB228 would put children and families at risk by effectively allowing people to carry hidden, loaded handguns in public without a permit or safety training. Eliminating Ohio’s concealed carry permit requirement would lower the bar for who may carry handguns in public in Ohio and would make it easy for individuals to carry loaded handguns in crowded town centers and on city streets. 90 percent of Ohio voters support requiring a permit to carry a concealed handgun in public. Lawmakers should put the safety of their constituents first and reject SB 180 and HB 228.

If you are interested in the safety of Ohioans, this bill is not the way you should be going. In the Senate, committees will be hearing various gun bills tomorrow that go in the right direction and will actually work to curb gun violence. Additionally, one of your colleagues, Rep. Henne, is introducing legislation that will address many of the glaring, dangerous holes in Ohio gun laws. It is surprising that this committee is so out of step with the wishes of Ohioans and the nation and believes that now is the time to loosen gun laws even further.

I am familiar with the current law for concealed carry of a handgun particularly the requirements for obtaining a permit and the fact use of deadly force may have possible criminal and civil liabilities for misuse of a firearm.

The current permitting system in Ohio contains safeguards of a criminal background check and a safety training course, which assures the public that people who conceal carry are well trained on how to handle a gun, can own one legally, and can carry handguns safely. Ohioans trust this system. In fact, a March 2016 a poll showed that 90% of Ohioans support it.

In the 13 months since permit less carry was enacted in Missouri, St. Louis has experienced a 25% increase in aggravated assaults with a gunover the same period in 2016. Since Arizona enacted permit less carry in 2010, the annual total of aggravated assaults committed with a firearm increased by 44%. That increase represents 1,519 more gun-related aggravated assaults committed in 2016 than in 2010. We don’t want those same results here in Ohio.

I’m at a loss as to why this committee feels like now is the time to pass a bill that will weaken Ohio gun laws. We should instead focus on the proposals that Gov. Kasich highlighted a few weeks ago – like Red Flag laws and strengthening our state’s Domestic Violence laws. SB 180 and HB 228 takes Ohio in the wrong direction. I urge this committee to vote NO on SB 180.