

Testimony Opposition on HB796
House Civil Justice Committee
Rep. Stephen Hambley, Chair

Submitted by:
Leah Bunck

Chair Hambley and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony in opposition to HB 796. I am writing to you today as a mother of two, spouse of a teacher who was involved in a school shooting, and social worker. I oppose this bill because it is a danger to Ohioans, and provides a false sense of deterrence of crime.

As an essential worker providing meals for seniors through Meals-on-Wheels in Central Ohio, I am unable to attend the hearing in person. I believe it is imperative for my voice to be heard in opposition of this dangerous bill.

From my research, laws resembling this one implemented in other states have seen an increase in firearm injuries which result in more emergency room visits and hospitalizations. In a time of COVID is it irresponsible to promote laws that add unnecessary visits to our medical system. This is disrespectful to our hardworking medical staff and a danger to gun violence victims and their families.

Additional research shows at least 30 people nationwide lose their life as a result of legislation like this bill. For a congress that continues to promote the value of life, it is shocking to me that your members would pass legislation that has proven time and time again to result in a loss of life.

It is also tone-deaf that you are passing legislation that disproportionately is proven to impact African Americans. It is a sign that representatives supporting this bill do not truly value the life of every Ohioan, and value our African American citizens even less.

In the current climate, I urge you to think about legislation that addresses crimes and gun violence in a way that does not promote it like House Bill 796. I hope this committee will take time to look deeper into who this bill will harm, rather than acting like it will help Ohioans. If the goal is to decrease gun violence and gun related deaths among Ohioans, again, research shows that this bill will not do that. I urge you to oppose this law for the safety of all us Ohioans.

Respectfully.

Leah Bunck, MSW