

My name is Annie Ha. I am a current freshman at the Ohio State University. I am writing this testimony as a plea to deny the passage of SB 237.

Last month was the seven-year mark of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting. In less than one month will be the two-year mark of the Stoneman Douglas High School shooting. These shootings occurred in a 6-year span from each other, yet what we've done as a country to prevent similar tragedies from occurring again is dismal.

As someone who has been a student for the past multiple school shootings, I am threatened everyday by the overlooming fact that today might be my last day, my last class. Now, with SB 237 on the table, I not only fear going to school but also going out in public. If SB 237 passes, it would further solidify the fate of me, my classmates, my 14 year old little sister who just started high school, and thousands of others across the state.

Recently, Kaitlin Bennet, a graduate of Kent State University, has started to gain media attention. Bennet is known for harassing people who oppose the passage of bills like SB 237 in order to humiliate them and further her cause to carry guns on campus and in public. Not only does she openly carry a gun to public places. This is dangerous because it emphasizes using firearms to handle petty conflicts, and because of her growing number of followers (now at 260k followers on Twitter and millions of views on Youtube), this increases the risk of harm towards innocent civilians on a daily basis. It is proof that this is one of the many unsafe ways people may abuse SB 237.

Allowing Ohio citizens to have more freedom to use guns in public will cause more harm than good. The bill states that this is supposed to be applied during situations of life-threatening harm. However, bringing a gun into an already dangerous situation only makes the situation worse. If someone carrying a weapon were to interpret a situation incorrectly and haphazardly use the gun to "protect themselves", it may result in multiple fatalities. Additionally, if the person on the receiving end saw the gun and they as well had a firearm, the results would be even worse.

We cannot add a deadly weapon into the equation and not expect a deadly outcome. In order to lessen the number of deaths caused by gun violence, we must subtract the guns themselves. This bill does the opposite. How will I, my classmates, my 14 year old sister, and future generations of this state and county be able to put trust in our government if they keep proposing bills such as this one? I implore you to reject SB 237 and find a better solution in order to protect the citizens of Ohio. Thank you for your time.