

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Institute for Legislative Action

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NRA

May 27, 2020

Members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee:

The National Rifle Association stands in support of SB 317, to amend section 109.78 of the Revised Code to expressly exempt, from a requirement that peace officer basic training be obtained, certain employees that a board of education or governing body of a school authorizes to go armed in a school safety zone within which the board or governing body has authority.

This bill clarifies the legislature's original intent that school employees be permitted to carry firearms when authorized by their local governing authority. A recent court challenge is seeking to rewrite the legislature's work to effectively deny local school's control over the safety of their students.

Starting in 2018 local school district have been training teachers, many through the FASTER Saves Lives program, and permitting them to carry firearms. The FASTER Saves Lives program "offers a carefully-structured curriculum offering over 26 hours of hands-on training over a 3-day class that exceeds the requirements of the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy. The purpose is not to replace police and EMT, but to allow teachers, administrators, and other personnel on-site to stop school violence rapidly and render medical aid immediately." This program was created with the help of law enforcement, as well as, medical and safety experts.

Rather than continue a successful program, Gabbard v. Madison Local School District seeks to impose burdensome and unnecessary requirements on school districts in a one-size-fits-all approach. This would effectively moot the legislature's intent and make it impossible for teachers to respond to emergencies in the most effective way possible.

SB 317 will reaffirm the legislature's intent and ensure that local school districts can continue to act in the best interest if their students. The NRA supports SB 317.

Sincerely,

John Weber
State Director
NRA-ILA