

Testimony on House Bill 317
Government Oversight and Reform Committee

Submitted by:
Sharon Roggenkamp

Chair Coley, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to SB 317. I am a constituent in Senator Coley's district. I write to you today as a registered voter and resident of Hamilton, Ohio. I oppose this bill to arm educational professionals in our schools because it will make all Ohioans less safe.

I ask you to consider the fact that here in Ohio and nationally, cases of firearm injuries and deaths occur regularly at the hands of trained, experienced police officers. Have you considered the consequences of a bill that permits an untrained teacher, who will not know how they will react until they perceive they have to, to fire a gun in a building full of children?

As you consider this bill, what data has been collected on school violence in Ohio? Have there been as many incidents in school as there have been firearm accidents, injuries, homicides, and suicides, in the major metropolitan areas of Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati, as well as counties?

You will find school incidents are a fraction of the daily toll gun violence takes in Ohio homes and streets each day. It is easy to throw more guns at the problem. It is very difficult to find common ground as public officials and act in the best interests of every Ohio citizen. Responsible licensing provisions, keeping guns out of the hands of domestic offenders, mandating safety locks on guns in the home, are simple commonsense safety measures all of us can agree on. Please adopt a proactive approach to pass laws that protect. This bill increases the threat of injury and death in Ohio.

As I reminded Senator Coley recently, it has been **340 days**, as of July 19, since the Oregon massacre in Dayton Ohio. Arming teachers, following this tragedy, and the lack of action that has followed, indicate that politics, rather than public service, is the driving force behind the conduct of this committee.

This bill has consequences. What will happen when a teacher makes a subjective or emotional, split second decision about perceived danger, and fires that gun? Have you talked to nurses or doctors who treat gunshot victims as you consider increasing this access?

Have you talked to the families of **Derrick Fudge, Lois Oglesby, Saeed Saleh, Logan Turner, Nicholas Cumer, Thomas McNichols, Beatrice Curtis, Monica Brickhouse, and Megan Betts**? Have you the courage to listen to their stories? No matter the gun,

no matter the law, no matter the situation, guns breed violence, and cause suffering, injury and death. Have you the strength to use your legislative power to save lives by enacting reasonable gun safety laws that protect every citizen? The loudest voices screaming about “their rights” don’t have the courage to talk to the families or victims of gun violence and to consider their rights, too.

Please find the courage to oppose this bill and turn your attention to the ones that truly matter.

Respectfully,

Sharon Roggenkamp
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