

Testimony on Senate Bill 317
Government Oversight and Reform Committee

Submitted by:
Madeline Dyer

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.

My name is Madeline Dyer and I am a first grade teacher in Southwestern City Schools and a volunteer with Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America.

As an educator and community member, I oppose SB 317, which would allow untrained teachers to carry loaded guns into Ohio elementary, middle, and high schools. This bill ignores the risks and consequences of bringing more guns onto school grounds. Introducing more guns in schools increases the risk of gun violence for students, teachers, and staff. There have already been documented incidents where guns carried into schools were discharged by staff on school grounds or misplaced or stolen and later found in the hands of students. Furthermore, teachers and safety experts oppose allowing guns in schools. The federal government's chief legal, law enforcement, public health, education, and emergency management agencies all agree that allowing civilians to carry guns in schools is not a sound security practice. I do not want to carry a gun onto school grounds nor do I want my coworkers carrying guns in Ohio schools.

School should be a safe place for students and educators alike. Children should not have to live in a world where we regularly have to practice "school safety drills" and threaten their comfort and peace of mind. Fellow teachers and I want to end gun violence and mass shootings in schools more than anyone, however, over and over again research shows that arming teachers does more harm than good.

It is time for us to stop discussing arming teachers and start discussing real solutions to gun violence: pass extreme risk laws, encourage secure firearm storage, create evidence based threat assessment programs, initiate effective, trauma-informed emergency planning, and create safe and equitable schools. I ask that you vote against SB 317.

Sincerely,
Madeline Dyer