

Testimony on Senate Bill 317

Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee

Senator William P. Coley II, Chair

Senator Matt Huffman, Vice Chair

Senator Hearcel F. Craig, Ranking Member

Submitted by: Sieglinde Martin

Chair Coley, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony in opposition of Senate Bill 317.

My name is Sieglinde Martin. I am a citizen of Columbus, Ohio for over 50 years. My second daughter was born here in the old Saint Ann's Hospital downtown. Today she, her husband and 2 children live in Sunbury. My grandson graduated on Saturday from Big Walnut HS and my granddaughter will be a junior soon.

I am speaking to you as a long-time resident, a mother, a grandmother, a retired pediatric physical therapist and a senior citizen.

It is an understatement when I say: I am concerned about S.B. 317.

The proposed Senate Bill 317 would allow public school personnel to carry handguns inside elementary, middle and high schools with as little as 8 hours of training or no training, instead of the required completed basic peace officer training course or 20 years of active duty as a peace officer.

Senate Bill 317 will make Big Walnut High School in Sunbury, which my granddaughter Annika attends, not more safe but more dangerous for her. This is upsetting me and her parents. It will add more stress to our lives as well as to the future workday of Big Walnut High School teachers and students.

Bringing guns into schools increases the risk of gun violence. There have already been incidents where guns carried into schools by school personnel were later found in the hands of students.

I understand that you introduced the legislation in support of your local school district, yet the Madison County School District Administrators are not representative for the majority of school districts in Ohio.

SB 317 would force the majority of voters of Ohio to abide by the rules created in support of a small minority. This legislation will effectively undermine our democratic principles, being essentially a “dictatorship by a small minority.”

Teachers and school safety experts oppose allowing guns in school. The American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association oppose guns in schools.

I urge you not to process Senate Bill 317 into law.

Respectfully,

Sieglinde Martin

