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Testimony on Senate Bill 317
Government Oversight and Reform Committee

Submitted by:
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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.

As an elected Ohio legislator, you work everyday on behalf of all Ohioans. Undoubtedly, the safety of our youngest citizens was on your mind in creating Senate Bill 317. Along with 250 other Ohio Mom Demand Action supporters who registered for a Zoom call to learn about this bill last week, I am asking that you reconsider your logic!

Under current state law, all armed school employees—including teachers, security guards, and special police—must either complete an approved basic peace officer training course, or have completed 20 years of active duty as a peace officer. This is a minimal requirement, especially when one considers that law enforcement officers receive an average of 840 hours of basic training, including 168 hours of training on weapons, self-defense, and the use of force.

Completely ignoring the risks and consequences of bringing guns onto school grounds, Senate Bill 317 would allow teachers to carry loaded guns in Ohio elementary, middle, and high schools without completing the safety training required by current Ohio law! We know that introducing more guns in schools increases the risk of gun violence. There have been numerous incidents where a gun has been discharged by staff on school grounds.¹ There have also been incidents where guns carried into schools were misplaced or stolen and later found in the hands of students.²

