

Testimony on Senate Bill 317
Government Oversight and Reform Committee

Submitted by:
Alexandra Hubbard

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 an Ohio resident and voter. I'm also a school psychologist working in K-12 public schools in Ohio. I urge you to reject SB 317 in order to ensure the safety of your constituents.

Allowing civilians to carry guns in schools is a safety hazard for students and staff. Introducing more guns in schools increases the risk of gun violence, even if accidental. There have been documented instances of guns being discharged by school staff on school grounds and guns being misplaced or stolen and ending up in the hands of students. We cannot allow for this risk in our schools.

As a school psychologist, the safety of public school students is of utmost importance to me. Research shows that increasing mental health professionals in schools such as school psychologists, counselors, and social workers increases school safety. There is no evidence that armed security officers in schools increase school safety, let alone armed civilians with minimal training. Research shows that the presence of armed security officers may actually be harmful to students. This risk of harm would surely increase by arming civilians in schools. Because of this, I feel strongly that we should not put resources towards arming school staff, especially when schools already have limited safety resources for students including mental health professionals.

I strongly urge you to oppose SB 317.

Respectfully submitted,

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