

Testimony on Senate Bill 317
Government Oversight and Reform Committee

Submitted by:
Marja Lasek-Martin

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 Toledo resident and a lawyer. In reading SB317, I thought of my cousin who is a second grade teacher.

It is not an exaggeration when I say Mary is the perfect grade school teacher. She thoroughly enjoys her students. She would prefer sitting on the floor while having story time or taking a nature walk with her class and showing them butterflies or examining creepy crawly things. She takes as much joy in their discovery of learning as they do. Many of her students who have grown up come back to tell her "you were that special grade school teacher I remember". Mary went into teaching because she has a passion for enlightening young minds. She would be ill-equipped to handle a gun nor would it be fair to expect someone with such a gentle spirit as hers to be asked to take on such a heavy responsibility. She would be more likely to take a hit for students than to flight back.

Studies have shown that anyone who hasn't received extensive training, such as that provided to law enforcement officers, will likely be mentally unprepared to take a life, especially the life of a student assailant. The New York Police Dept. reported an 18-20% degradation of accuracy skills once an officer becomes involved in an actual gunfight (Vila and Morrison 1994). This suggests that such motor skills are subject to degradation during levels of high stress. The training which police undergo is not just how to use a weapon but how to manage stress in a deadly situation. This is something which can't be mastered in a short class.

What SB317 is asking our educators to do is unacceptable. It puts a heavy burden upon them physically and mentally. This is why I would request the committee to vote against SB317.

Marja Lasek-Martin