

Testimony on Senate Bill 317
Government Oversight and Reform Committee

Submitted by:
Susan Frantz

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 constituent who lives in Avon Lake, Ohio 44012. I served Ohio's public school students over 25 years as a teacher (Music K-12, Special Needs Tutor) and volunteer in the schools.

I know firsthand the training, dedication and focus it takes to attend to and to teach children and youth. A teacher must be ready to fine tune lessons in a snap to continue to effectively reach their students. Responsibility for guns during educational time is too much to ask of any teacher, even a willing teacher. Teaching is the goal of teachers. This is what they studied and trained to do. The expectations put upon them today continue to grow. Adding the responsibility of being armed, especially with limited training or little training required as in SB317, is way above the expectations held by many educators and parents. Thus, I definitely do not support SB317.

Unlike myself, some think schools will be safer. Everytown, a gun safety research group, finds this is false: "SB 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. 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.

But SB 317 would exempt teachers from this requirement, and allow school districts to employ armed personnel in schools with as little as 8 hours of concealed carry training (6 of which can be completed online)—or with no training at all, if firearms are not concealed when carried.

There is no amount of training that makes it safe for teachers to carry guns in schools. SB 317 would worsen an already-dangerous situation by gutting the training Ohio law currently requires and allowing teachers to carry guns in schools without extensive safety training. Lawmakers should put the safety of their constituents first and reject SB 317."

I find this very alarming. Please, I beg you to vote against SB317.

Thank you for your service and for representing us and our concerns.

With warm regards and hope for a safer future,
Susan M. Frantz