

Testimony on House Bill 99

House Criminal Justice Committee

April 14, 2021

Submitted by:

Carolina López-Ruiz

Chair LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to House Bill 99. My name is Carolina López-Ruiz and I am a mother, a teacher, and resident of Columbus.

I will keep my testimony very brief, as others have and will delve into the details and data that indicates this proposal to arm untrained teachers is yet another push to move Ohio in the wrong direction of safety

for your children and your community, and puts teachers and others at incredible risk.

I speak from my heart when I say that, as a teacher (university professor), I would not at all want to be armed nor would I want my children's teachers to be armed, much less untrained. How is it we require training to drive a car, which is not built to kill people (although it can, if misused, hence the strict training),

and we will allow teachers, who are in charge of our most vulnerable ones, to use a gun without training?

a tool which exclusive purpose, for which it was manufactured, is to kill (in fact to kill several people at once in a few seconds and at a distance?). This is simply not logical. This is a reckless piece of legislation, part of the "death cult" that the gun lobby is trying to spread in our society.

Teachers have enough responsibility in their hands, one of the highest you might say, such as is shaping the malleable minds and skills of your youth, educating them for the future, understanding them, caring for them. How can we put on them this burden, of using fire weapons in the unlikely case of a school attack? You want to make the teacher another active shooter, and untrained? Can you imagine the confusion? The unnecessary escalation of an infinite number of potential situations, such as fights among

students, or false alarms? And you want, furthermore, to remove the need for training? Precisely for figures who stand every day in the midst of your children for hours and hours? What can go wrong!?

This is a formula for more risk, not less, for more potential shootings in schools, not fewer. For turning our

schools into those we imagine in the Wild West movies, not in the XXI century civilized world. There are many ways to prevent the rare mass shootings, and this is not one of them: red flag laws, background checks, raising the age of gun purchase (not lowering it!), more training, not less, more education about handling and storing guns (not less), updated security systems in schools, preventing bullying, promoting reporting and student awareness of mental illness, and a long etc.

Please, reject this unnecessary and reckless proposal; do not put this burden on teachers.

Yours sincerely,

Carolina