

Criminal Justice Committee
Opposition Testimony on HB 99
Sammie Dannug
4/10/2021

Dear Rep LaRe and Committee Members;

My name is Sammie Dannug and I am a teacher at Jackson Middle School in Massillon, Oh. I firmly oppose HB 99.

In 2018, I experienced an attempted school shooting that ended with the shooter taking his own life in the school bathroom. My classroom was just 2 doors down from that bathroom. I hid with my students in the classroom for 4 hours until the all clear. A worse tragedy was averted because another student saw the gun and ran to tell a teacher. This is a quiet suburban community, with excellent schools, surrounded by rural areas and I never expected that I would face this situation. I am convinced that having teachers or other civilians carrying guns in the school, with only a few hours training on how to use them, would have made no difference in this situation. Teachers are not going to want to shoot students. Such policing activities are best left to School "Peace Officers" with extensive training. Teachers train to teach, not to be police.

I am very concerned that personal and racial biases may contribute to unjustified shootings in schools, especially when minimally trained civilians are armed. In a stressful situation, a civilian may perceive a student to be a threat when the child is not. Black and brown children, bigger and louder boys, or children with learning disorders or hearing loss, who have trouble following directions, will all be more likely to be perceived as a threat. If a gun is at hand, a staff member may commit a deadly mistake.

The young teen who shoot himself at our school accessed the gun from a locked cabinet in his home. He took the back of the cabinet apart with a screw driver and then hid the gun. Apparently no one knew the gun was missing until the shooting. Where would we be able to safely store a gun in our classroom? Just because you put it in a locked drawer does not

ensure that an older child cannot get it out. To deter school shootings, the safest place for a guns is far away from school.

Please reject HB 99.

Sammie Dannug