

Testimony on House Bill 99

House Criminal Justice Committee

March 24, 2021

Submitted by:

Deborah L. Hogshead

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 Deborah L. Hogshead. I am an Ohio resident and a former educator.

I oppose HB 99 and encourage you to do the same. Please respond to this letter and let me know where you stand on this proposed legislation.

As mentioned above, I'm a former educator. My parents were health professionals—one a physician, the other a nurse. Training is critical for teachers and for health professionals. Without sufficient training, credentialing and licensure, the public is likely to suffer in one way or another.

I object to HB 99 and the proposal to lower training requirements for teachers to carry loaded firearms in school for a number of reasons. First of all, I oppose the very idea of teachers carrying firearms in our schools. The presence of guns will only introduce new risks. Guns can be discharged by accident. They can also be misplaced or stolen and wind up in the hands of students.

But if our legislators believe teachers should be armed, then I vehemently oppose any effort to reduce training requirements. Basic peace officer training includes 728 hours of instruction. Under current state law, armed school employees must have completed a basic peace officer training course or have 20 years of experience as an active duty peace officer. But HB 99 would exempt teachers from this requirement and would allow school districts to hire armed personnel with nothing more than 8 hours of concealed carry training. Without sufficient training, the health and safety of our students will be at even greater risk. HB 99 doesn't make sense.

You need to listen to the voting public—not the gun lobby. You should put the health and safety of students over gun manufacturers and others likely to profit from the sale of more guns. Your attention should focus on understanding the causes of gun violence and include a review of research into best practices for gun-violence prevention.

I urge you to oppose HB 99.

Thank you.

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