

Criminal Justice Committee
Opposition testimony for HB 99
Alexandra Hubbard
4/12/2021

Dear Rep. LaRe and Committee Members;

I'm a school psychologist working in K-12 public schools in NE Ohio and I vote regularly. I am writing to strongly oppose HB 99. I urge you to reject this bill in order to ensure the safety of your constituents.

If you pass HB 99, a mere 8 hours of weapons training (with just 2 hours on the shooting range) will become the lowest legal standard for districts to allow civilians to carry guns in schools. There will be at least some, perhaps many, schools who will then choose this inexpensive route for arming staff. Introducing more guns in schools increases the risks of gun violence, even if accidental. There have been documented instances of guns being discharged by school staff on school grounds and guns being misplaced or stolen and ending up in the hands of students. We cannot allow for this risk in our schools.

As a school psychologist, the safety and mental health of public school students is of utmost importance to me. Research shows that increasing the number of mental health professionals in schools such as school psychologists, counselors, and social workers increases school safety. There is no evidence that armed security officers in schools increase school safety, let alone armed civilians with minimal training. Research also shows that the presence of armed security officers may actually be harmful to students. This risk would surely be increased by arming civilians in schools. Because of this, I am convinced that we should not put resources towards arming school staff, especially when schools already have limited safety resources for students including mental health professionals.

I urge you to vote no on HB 99.

Thank you for your attention,
Alexandra Hubbard