

Testimony on House Bill 99
House Criminal Justice Committee
April 15, 2021

Submitted by:
Sieglinde Martin

Chair Jeff LaRe, Vice Chair D.J. Swearing, Ranking Member David Leland, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony in opposition of House Bill 99.

My name is Sieglinde Martin. I am testifying as a constituent, a mother, a grandmother, and resident of central Ohio for over fifty years. I am concerned about H.B. 99.

I am sorry that, due to the Covid-19 Epidemic, as one of the medically designated at-risk Citizens, I am unable to attend today's Hearing.

The proposed House Bill 99 would allow public school personnel to carry handguns inside elementary, middle and high schools with as little as 8 hours of training or no training, instead of the required completed basic peace officer training course or 20 years of active duty as a peace officer.

Allowing that an untrained teacher or any other school personnel brings a loaded gun to school is an unsafe proposal. School zones have to be gun-free zones for a good reason.

Bringing guns into schools increases the risk of gun violence. A false alarm may occur and an innocent parent, student, or teacher may be shot. What a tragic mistake that will be! Saying sorry afterwards will not heal a disabling injury or give life to the killed victim.

Imaging your child or grandchild would die this way in school!

My granddaughter Annika is a senior at Big Walnut Highschool. Do I want her exposed to such a dangerous possibility? No, I want her safe in school! I want her to be just as safe as my four children had been when they attended school in the 70th and 80th right here in Franklin County.

It is upsetting to me and Annika's parents to contemplate that teachers would bring guns to Big Walnut High School. Isn't it stressful enough that our school children are endangered by Covid-19? You can't outlaw a virus epidemic but you can keep our school gun free. **It is your duty to do so!**

Already there have been incidents where guns carried into schools by school personnel were later found in the hands of students. I remember reading about one of those incidents happening in an Ohio elementary school. Fortunately, at that time the gun was retrieved before the small child used it.

House Bill 99 will make Ohio schools not more safe but more dangerous.

I understand that HB 99 was introduced in support of a small local school district in Madison County. Are the unwise School District Administrators representative for the majority of school districts in Ohio?

HB 99 would force the majority of voters of Ohio to abide by the rules created in support of a small minority. This legislation will effectively undermine our democratic principles, being essentially **"a dictatorship by a small minority."**

Teachers and school safety experts oppose allowing guns in school. The American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association oppose guns in schools.

I urge you to vote against House Bill 99.

Respectfully submitted,

Sieglinde Martin