

Testimony on House Bill 99  
House Criminal Justice Committee  
March 24, 2021

Submitted by:  
Linda Taylor

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 HB 99. My name is Linda Taylor and I am a resident of Columbus.

We can agree on the importance of our children's safety in schools. I am a resident of Ohio, and a citizen very interested in this topic.

Your recent introduction of HB 99 confounds me. When safety of children is on the line, why on earth would we reduce the training required for those carrying firearms on school property? If anyone on school property is carrying firearms, I want them to be skilled at a high level. Otherwise, the very thing for which we are striving for, safety, is compromised by the amateurish requirements that are dumbed down by this bill.

School districts should be able to have armed security on premises if they deem that necessary. They should not get to decide on the level of training for them. That standard should be set state wide. Those carrying weapons capable of killing, should be skilled exactly as we expect peace officers to be skilled, because that's exactly who these people are acting as, peace officers. They should be required to have successfully completed the Ohio Peace Officer Training program. Period. To require less is a dereliction of duty on the part of Ohio to keep its citizens safe, especially our youngest and most vulnerable citizens.

I believe HB 99 is irresponsible and endangering. The two largest teacher's organizations are against allowing guns in schools. The federal government's education, public health, chief legal, law enforcement and emergency management agencies all agree that citizens carrying loaded guns in schools is not an effective and safe practice.

Measures that will positively impact safety at schools include extreme risk laws (active shooters are predominantly former and current students with behavioral warning signs), secure gun storage requirements (most school shooters have obtained firearms from family and friends), background checks on all gun purchases, and raising the age to purchase semi-automatic firearms to 21. I commit to supporting efforts you put forth to pass these types of measures.

I implore you to retract this bill and maintain the standards high for the carrying of firearms on school property. Our children deserve best practices to keep them safe, and HB 99 is an unconscionable reduction in standards.