

Criminal Justice Committee

Opposition Testimony on HB 99: Arming Teachers

Submitted by: Sheri Cody

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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.

As a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthesiologist in Stark County, I am urging you to vote no on HB 99. As a professional, I have been involved with hundreds of emergency situations. I can tell you that years of training and retraining are required to remain calm and handle extremely stressful situations. Also having mentors who have dealt with emergencies is an important component to handling emergencies. Reducing the training for Ohioans to carry guns in schools to just 8 hours (with 6 hours of it being online) as outlined in this bill, is a recipe for disaster. It will not make us safer; it will certainly make our state more dangerous. There have already been 90+ publicly reported incidents in our nation's schools where a student got hold of a teacher's or policeman's gun and, in some cases, actually fired the gun. In some incidents a teacher/staff member accidentally shot themselves by accident (Gifford Law Center). There's no evidence that having more guns in schools, especially in the hands of minimally trained civilians, reduces school shootings. I am not sure why there is continual push to move these bad ideas forward.

As a CRNA I have seen the devastation of gunshot wounds. A study of 23,000 Trauma patients by Johns Hopkins Hospital found that gun injuries require 10 times more units of blood to treat compared to other types of trauma, and patients who have been shot are 14 times more likely to die than other trauma patients.

Children should not be around guns. Neurological imaging makes it clear that the prefrontal cortex (the seat of reasoning and judgement) is not mature until the age of 20+. No matter how much they've been taught otherwise, children are likely to pick up a gun they find and shoot someone accidentally, commit suicide or even commit a crime. This bill endangers students and all those around them.

I urge you to vote no on HB 99.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheri Cody, RN, BSN, CRNA