

## Testimony on House Bill 99

House Criminal Justice Committee

April 13, 2021

Submitted by:

Meghann Naveau

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 Meghann Naveau, and I am a business owner, parent, and lifelong Ohioan, growing up in a small, rural town and now residing in Bellbrook.

As my oldest child enters the public school system, I'm increasingly aware of the risks from which I have been able to shelter him for the first five years of life. When he begins kindergarten, I lose much control over not only the words and topics he hears, but also my ability to protect his physical safety all day, every day.

When my child enters a school, I have expectations that the personnel and teachers who will care for him are trained professionals, meeting not only the most rigorous standards of training in their fields of expertise, but also the highest standards of safety requirements and regulations that help to ensure the physical well-being – and ultimately protect the life – of my child.

As I hope you are aware, the requirements outlined in HB 99 would exempt teachers from current training requirements for being armed in schools and allow school districts to employ armed personnel in schools with as little as **eight** hours of concealed carry training (**six** of which can be completed online) instead of the current **728** hours of instruction. This is unacceptable.

In comparison, under Ohio law, a student driver must have a minimum of 24 hours of classroom instruction and eight hours of behind-the-wheel instruction in driver training. Students also must complete at least 50 hours of in-car practice (10 at night) with a parent or legal guardian.<sup>1</sup> When we as a state require this level of training, we recognize the value of in-depth, in-person practice when operating a tool/machine that has the potential to harm and even kill others. Why would we require **hundreds** of hours less of training for a tool that can be used to kill many people in a short time?

In addition, teachers and law enforcement oppose allowing guns in schools. The American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association, the nation's two largest teachers' organizations, oppose arming teachers.<sup>2</sup> The National Association of School Resource Officers strongly opposes

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.drivertraining.ohio.gov/drivers.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, American Federation of Teachers, and National Education Association, "Keeping Our Schools Safe: A Plan for Preventing Mass Shootings and Ending All Gun Violence in American Schools," February 2020, <https://www.everytownresearch.org/school-safety-plan>

proposals to arm teachers due to the risk it would pose to law enforcement, students and the school community, as well as the risks to the armed teachers themselves.<sup>3</sup>

I have personally spoken with officers from the Centerville police department about this issue, and they expressed concern about armed people in schools making their jobs harder in the event of a school shooting. They worry about the greater risks and loss of life because officers would likely be unable to quickly identify and subdue an active shooter when multiple people are armed and firing upon police arrival. And, even some of the most highly trained law enforcement officers in the country, those of the New York City Police Department, see their ability to shoot accurately decrease significantly when engaged in gunfights with perpetrators.<sup>4</sup>

Please help me and every Ohio parent, teacher, and school faculty member to continue to do everything in our power to protect our children. Oppose HB 99.

Sincerely,

Meghann Naveau

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<sup>3</sup> NASRO, "NASRO Opposes Arming Teachers," February 22, 2018. Available here: <https://bit.ly/3cVbBxE>

<sup>4</sup> Bernard D. Rostker et al., "Evaluation of the New York City Police Department Firearm Training and Firearm-Discharge Review Process" (RAND Corporation, 2008), <https://bit.ly/2U9bk0t>.