

Criminal Justice Committee
Opposition Testimony to HB 99
Submitted By Lorrie Levensgood
4/13/2021

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.

I am writing in regards to HB 99. My name is Lorrie Levensgood. I have taught in Ohio schools for 34 years as an intervention specialist. I am deeply distressed by the possibility that the Ohio Legislature might drastically reduce safety training requirements for teachers and other civilians who carry loaded handguns inside elementary, middle and high schools.

I believe that allowing teachers or others to carry guns in schools is not a sound security practice and would likely further endanger our students and staff. Introducing more guns in schools increases the risk of gun violence. Guns in the hands of untrained individuals heightens the possibility of accidents, guns falling into the hands of students, and more gun incidents in our schools.

Law enforcement officers receive an average of 730 hours of basic training, including 168 hours of training on weapons, self-defense, and the use of force. But in states with laws aimed at arming school personnel, school staff receive significantly less training. Even some of the most highly trained law enforcement in the country see their ability to shoot accurately decrease significantly when engaged in gunfights with perpetrators. I cannot imagine the damage that teachers and others with only a few hours training will do in the middle of a gunfight.

Please stop this bill from going any further to protect our students and staff.

Thank you,
Lorrie Levensgood