

## **Testimony on House Bill 99**

House Criminal Justice Committee

November 2, 2021

Submitted by:

Laura Irvin

Chair LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to write this testimony in opposition to House Bill 99. My name is Laura Irvin and I am a parent and small business owner. I am an Ohio resident and voter from Lorain County. I grew up in Texas and come from a family of hunters. My mother was a favored mom in the neighborhood because she would cook anything my brother and his friends shot and killed as long as it was skinned. She prepared rabbit, venison, frog, squirrel, dove, quail and snake. The boys ate it. That's one side of the gun story of my growing up. I have other experiences with guns from my youth. I was 11 and playing in my yard when a car stopped in front of my house and shot me twice in the chest with a BB gun. They laughed and then drove off. Gun suicide #1 was a fellow band member when I was a senior in high school. Gun suicide #2 was my high school student council president, Brad Hutchison – the stepson of former Republican Texas Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison. Guns are lethal. Schools are no places for guns.

In March 10 people were killed in Boulder, Colorado including a police officer with extensive firearm training. This is just one example where the anecdote of a good guy with a gun can stop a bad guy with a gun doesn't work. HB 99 would allow teachers/staff to carry concealed loaded weapons in schools with only 28 hours of training. Law enforcement officers receive an average of **840** hours of basic training including 168 hours of training on weapons, self-defense, and the use of force.

To think that a teacher or staff member with minimal amount of training could stop a school shooting is fantasy thinking. More guns make us less safe. Guns are lethal. Schools are no places for guns.

When this bill was presented last year there were over 250 testimonies submitted in opposition. There were only a few testimonies in favor of arming teachers/school staff with little to no training. Respectfully, I think it is time to ask yourself if you were elected to secure the safety of the people in Ohio, or if you were elected to help the sales of firearms. More guns make us less safe. Guns are lethal. Schools are no places for guns. Vote no on HB 99.