

**Criminal Justice Committee
Opposition Testimony to HB 99**

Submitted by Dan Levengood

Chair LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony. My name is Dan Levengood and I live in Jackson Township, a suburban community in Stark County. I oppose HB 99 which would allow school districts to arm teachers or other civilians with just 28 hours of firearm training, compared to the 730+ Peace Officer training required by current law. Twenty-eight hours, many of which can be online, is hardly enough to qualify someone to carry a gun in a classroom, a crowded school hallway or a packed high school gym. Even well respected Police Departments report that their highly trained officers' shooting accuracy decreases significantly when engaged in gunfights. Not a single Ohio law enforcement agency has supported arming teachers or other civilians in schools. As the Executive Director of the Patrolman's Benevolent Assoc. of Ohio testified in 2019, "There must be minimum training requirements for someone entrusted with the awesome right of carrying a weapon that can deprive another person of their life." Law enforcement know that armed civilians, with guns drawn, at a crises scene just makes their job harder. In the words of one police chief from Montgomery County, Maryland, "a cop shows up and there's people with guns in their hands. We don't know how to tell the good guys with a gun from the bad guys with a gun". We don't need this situation in our schools.

I urge you to protect our children by rejecting HB 99.

Thank you,
Dan Levengood