

**Testimony on House Bill 227**  
**House Government Oversight Committee**

**Submitted by: Laura Robertson Boyd**

Chair Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony in opposition to House Bill 227. My name is Laura Robertson-Boyd. I live in Columbus, Ohio, and I am a volunteer with the Ohio Chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America.

We are a grassroots movement of American mothers and others fighting for public safety measures that respect the Second Amendment while protecting us from gun violence. Moms Demand Action is part of Everytown for Gun Safety, the largest gun violence prevention organization in the country with more than 6 million supporters.

We oppose this dangerous permitless carry bill which would jeopardize public safety in Ohio. We support the rights of law-abiding citizens to carry concealed handguns in public places, but we also believe that they should undergo a background check and safety training. Ohioans support the current permit system and overwhelmingly oppose making it legal to carry a hidden, loaded handgun in public without a permit or safety training.

We also believe it is common-sense to make sure that people undergo a background check before they carry a concealed handgun in public so that public safety as a whole can be protected.

Under this bill, a person could buy a gun - which in Ohio does not require a criminal background check if not buying from a federally licensed dealer - and then, without any further vetting or any safety training, immediately carry that loaded gun down the street around our children and families. At the same time, law enforcement would lose a critical tool for stopping people with dangerous histories from carrying concealed guns in public.

That is why law enforcement officers have opposed attempts to pass permitless carry. We agree with them when they note that this would interfere with their ability to enforce the law and keep people with dangerous histories from carrying guns in public.

There is no legitimate public safety reason for dismantling our current permit system. Supporters of this legislation falsely claim that it will reduce crime, and that in the few states that have moved to a permitless carry system, it hasn't become the "wild west."

But, facts matter, and we know that states that have enacted permitless carry laws have seen substantial increases in firearm-related crimes. For example, since 2003, when Alaska became the first state to enact permitless carry legislation, the rate of aggravated assaults committed with a firearm in that state increased by 82% by 2017.[1,2](#) Since Arizona enacted permitless carry legislation in 2010, the rate of aggravated assaults committed with a firearm in that state increased by 39% by 2017.[3,4](#) That increase represents 1,797 more gun-related aggravated assaults committed in 2017 than in 2010. Thus, we know that HB 227 would increase, rather than decrease, the number of firearms-related crimes in Ohio, making Ohioans less safe.

This bill is dangerous for Ohio. Moms Demand Action supports the ability of law-abiding citizens to carry a concealed handgun in public – but we believe they should get a permit and undergo training to do so. It's a simple system that keeps us all safe. We stand with those who protect public safety and the public, and we urge you to vote against this bill.

Thank you.

Laura Robertson-Boyd  
Columbus Local Group Lead  
Ohio Chapter  
Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America

1. Crime Reported in Alaska 2003. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Public Safety, Statewide Services. <https://bit.ly/2Hy475w>. Rates were calculated using population data from the United States Census Bureau.
2. Crime in Alaska 2017. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Public Safety, Statewide Services. <https://bit.ly/2G0nq4R>. Rates were calculated using population data from the United States Census Bureau.
3. Crime in Arizona, 2010. Phoenix, Arizona: Arizona Department of Public Safety. <https://bit.ly/2Uffq3Q>. Rates were calculated using population data from the United States Census Bureau.
4. Crime in Arizona, 2017. Phoenix, Arizona: Arizona Department of Public Safety. <https://bit.ly/2Rds4hV>. Rates were calculated using population data from the United States Census Bureau.