

Testimony on House Bill 227

House Government and Oversight Committee

June 17, 2021

Submitted by:

Leah Bunck, LSW

Chair Wilkin, Vice Chair White, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to House Bill 227. I am writing to you today as a mother of two, spouse of a teacher who was involved in a school shooting, voter, and social worker. I am proud to be an Ohioan, and will continue to use my voice for my family and community. First, I am taken back and concerned by how quickly this hearing was scheduled. It did not allow me as I work to provide Meals-on-Wheels on the community time to take off, and I was barely able to submit testimony. I have made sure I took time to submit opposition though, because this is such a dangerous law! I oppose this bill because it is a danger to all Ohians and will lead to more violence, injury, and even deaths for the community and for gun owners.

I have family members who own firearms, but I am proud of them because they have taken all the steps to ensure they are trained and responsible gun owners. This bill would encourage more people to own guns with electing out of training that is important for the safety of our children and families, but also so important for the gun owner. I think it is sad and dangerous that this committee would consider a bill that would encourage less training, easier access for criminals to overall dangerous practices for gun owners.

I live in fear for myself and all the other parents that we will find ourselves in the home or in public with someone who doesn't know how to properly store or use their gun. I am confident that without training there will be more deaths from unwanted discharges, inadequate storage, and limited education on even how to use the gun. Again, this is a danger to our children, community, and the gun owner themselves. I know someone who died from an accidental discharge. I can only imagine how this dangerous bill would increase these occurrences when the gun owner has little to no training to prevent such discharges.

I highly encourage this committee to rethink the proposal of this bill, and prioritize the important things for Ohioans- keeping them safe, that include sensible gun owners. Legislation like HB 227 does not belong in our state and I encourage you to vote against this bill and use more time focusing on what really matters in our state and for your constituents.

Respectfully,

Leah Bunck, MSW, LSW