Testimony Opposing HB227
House Government and Oversight Committee
Submitted by: Joan Calem
Oct 25, 2021

Chair Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Sweeney and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to provide testimony opposing HB227.

My name is Joanie Calem and I am an educator and a resident of Franklin County. I am extremely concerned about the language of HB 227, that essentially allows anyone in Ohio, regardless of their mental and emotional state or past history of violence or criminal behavior, to carry a loaded firearm wherever they like without applying for a permit or passing safety training.

Currently, Ohio law requires both background checks and an application with a waiting period to own and carry a firearm. 90% of Ohio voters polled in 2016 approved of this law. Nationwide, 88% of voters agree that people need to get a permit and pass safety training in order to carry a firearm.

By passing this law, Ohio legislators would be joining a few other states in the country that have passed similar laws. It would also be joining those states in seeing a huge rise in the number of gun related deaths and crimes. Currently in Alaska, there are 465 more aggravated assaults every year since the enactment of permitless carry legislation in 2003. Currently in Arizona, there are 921 more aggravated assaults every year since the enactment of permitless carry legislation in 2010. Permitless carry has never proven effective to make a state safer. It makes a state less safe, which is of course why law enforcement agencies oppose these laws nationwide.

Why is this even being considered? Ohio voters overwhelmingly support the current law, so HB 227 does not represent the wishes of the voters. Lawmakers need to put the voters' wishes and the safety of Ohio constituents first and reject HB 227. This bill should not even be being considered as it does not reflect what Ohioans want in order to keep themselves and their families safe from gun violence.

Thank you for your consideration.

Joan Calem