

Testimony on House Bill 325
Government Oversight Committee
Date: 12/7/21
Submitted by: Joan Calem

Chair Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Brown, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this written testimony in opposition to HB 325. My name is Joan Calem. I am an educator and a concerned citizen of Franklin County.

The wording of HB 325 prohibits the following during a state of emergency:

- Seizure of firearms (including components or accessories), ammunition, firearm magazines, weapons other than firearms.
- Restrictions of possession of firearms, ammunition, firearms magazines or weapons other than firearms
- Suspension or revocation of any concealed carry handgun license unless exceptions apply
- Refusal to accept or process a concealed carry handgun license application which has been properly submitted
- Close or limit operations of shooting ranges (on either privately or publicly owned land)

There are so many things that the legislature needs to be taking care of during a pandemic and a state of emergency. The supposition of this bill is that the best way to keep people safe during a state of emergency is to allow them free access to weapons of all types. I fail to see the logic here. During the past 20 months of the Covid 19 pandemic, there are troubling indicators of increased risk of domestic violence and firearm suicide. For example, calls to a National Suicide Prevention Hotline call center are up 300% and domestic violence hotlines are seeing increased volume all over the country. Homicide is on the increase, armed burglaries are on the increase. More guns are not keeping people safe, as witnessed by the recent unnecessary and tragic school shooting in our neighboring state of Michigan.

There is not reason to pass this bill. It will make the work of our police force far more difficult, restrict public officials from enacting policies in favor of the health and safety of Ohioans by prioritizing guns as you might food stores, doctor's offices and other life-sustaining businesses, and unnecessarily tie the hands of public health officials during state of emergencies by requiring them to accept concealed carry handgun applications when the building is open to the public, despite any extenuating circumstances that may make accepting applications unsafe and burdensome.

Please do not pass this bill to a House vote.

Sincerely,

Joan Calem

