



# Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence

*Preventing gun violence through education, advocacy, and public awareness*

House Government Oversight Committee

February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 Hearings on HB 325 and HB 455

Chairman Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Brown and Committee Members

The Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence opposes both HB325 and HB455 for many reasons but the most obvious is the blatant stripping of powers of anyone or any government entity in regards to weapons except those gun owners that want to carry their weapons wherever they please.

HB 325 clearly is a prejudice bill and will increase the probability of misuse by those declaring a riot, mob or the potential of one. The bill allows declaring any of these circumstances to be danger, and gives permission for measures to be taken to keep the peace except there will not be any prohibition of guns being carried into those same places.

Important questions are why would you propose a bill that allows a wide variety of interpretations as to what constitutes a riot, mob or a potential of one and yet mandate the protection of those carrying guns into that very same place. Those two things seem to contradict a goal of keeping the peace.

We also question why there is no provisions in the bill that names the people that would have decision making powers and we ask who will train and educate them on the way they could decide to call any gathering a mob or riot. Is it when they don't like the purpose of the gathering? Is it anytime a crowd isn't totally obedient to instructions? Is it when they don't like the color of the skin of the crowd or when the gathering is in a neighborhood that is new to them? Are the same criteria going to be used to judge the people carrying the guns?

We ask that you consider all of these questions and then vote no. HB 325 takes rights away from many and gives more privileges to the armed gun owners.

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HB 455 continues the laws being made for the privileged class of gun owners. The bill allows signs to prohibit the carrying of weapons onto the premises and there are prohibited places like school zones and court houses. Unfortunately, the bill forgives the carrying of guns into prohibited places IF the person carrying leaves when asked. Does the bill really expect an employee to ask someone 'when discovered' with a gun to leave? Isn't that the responsibility of the law? Only if that person carrying a gun refuses to leave are they committing a crime. When was it decided that if the gun owners don't respect the law that we will just change the law to forgive their behavior? It is not our duty to enforce the law and we certainly think it is a mistake to ask anyone (especially our young people) to ask an armed person to leave. If the person carrying a gun is law abiding then they will obey the prohibition without being asked. Instead this bill is protecting the gun carriers from the law.

We respectfully ask that you do not vote for these bills.

The Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence

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