

Opposition testimony on Sub SB215
House Government Oversight Committee

February 17, 2022
Submitted by: Andrea Kovesdi

Chairman Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Brown and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to provide written testimony today. My name is Andrea Kovesdi and I am writing as a concerned citizen and small business owner in opposition of Sub Senate Bill 215. This bill would make it easier for criminals and people charged with crimes to carry concealed handguns by eliminating the current requirement of undergoing a background check as well as having to complete gun safety training.

We live in a country that should be setting the standard for the rest of the world in protecting its citizens. Instead, our homicide rate is 25 times, that's (TWENTY-FIVE) TIMES higher than any other high-income nation! We also lose 23,000 Americans a year to gun suicide. In Ohio alone the rate of gun deaths increased at double the rate that it did nationwide between 2010 and 2019. Do any of you truly believe that what Ohio really needs is a law that would make it easier for people to get their hands on a lethal weapon and carry that loaded weapon while walking around in public among your children and families? I have a feeling what you're thinking is that this bill, somehow, is only for "law-abiding" citizens. Guess what? No one is born a criminal, our prisons are full of citizens who were law-abiding until they weren't.

I became actively involved in watching and submitting testimony on gun bills in Ohio almost two years ago. Since that time, I have watched bills that will make this state a more dangerous place to live, visit and do business receive several hearings with little support from proponents (read gun lobby) and extensive opposition make their way through the statehouse on their way to becoming law. At the same time this is happening, sensible bills that would help to make Ohio safer for all those who live or choose to spend any time here sit idly by receiving nothing other than a sponsor hearing. It makes me wonder who you are really listening to and representing. I think that I already know the answer and it is most definitely not reassuring to this lifelong Ohioan who sees her beloved state veering off into the wrong direction at every turn.

We don't have to keep living like this. Last Monday was the last day of National Gun Violence Survivor's Week, where America surpassed the number of gun deaths experienced by our peer countries in an entire calendar year. Tragically, our gun death rate is 11 times greater than that of other high income countries. Gun violence in America is a public health crisis and we need our elected state officials to address it like our local Mayors are doing in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Elyria, Dayton and Columbus.

Please stop this bill from proceeding any further and start protecting **all** of your constituents and **all** of our rights.

