

Opposition Testimony SB215

Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee

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Submitted by:

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Chairman Wilkin, Vice Chair White and Ranking Member Brown: Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony today. I am a retired Ohio physician who worked for many years in one of our major trauma hospitals where I saw far too much horrible damage from firearm violence, usually among young people. And that was among survivors (the dead ones aren't hospitalized.). SB215 would expand who can carry concealed weapons to many people without training and even people with criminal backgrounds. Clear evidence from other states shows such legislation increases firearm injuries and deaths.

Concealed carry requires a background check and training because it is often dangerous to the public. Concealed carry is given specific licensure in order to maintain a level of safety - in who can own a gun and how they are permitted to carry it. Gun rights activists need to stop manipulating the second amendment to further their "guns everywhere" agenda. Concealed carry by untrained people and even known criminals is NOT "a well-regulated militia." Lawmakers need to stop caving to the gun industry at the expense of the lives of Ohioans.

SB215 would permit Ohioans without any training in the use of guns to carry a concealed handgun and sneak up on others. Handguns require more skill to use properly than a car and are at least as lethal. The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports about 38,000 fatalities from car crashes annually. Roughly 35,000 people are killed by guns every year. Prior to obtaining a driver's license, Ohio law includes classroom time, on the road practice with an instructor, 50 hours of on the road experience with a licensed citizen as well as a written test and driving exam, over a minimum of six months' time. That is sensible legislation for the sake of safety on the roads. Legislation regarding concealed carry and who may obtain a license should be about safety. Not about rushing to put guns in the hands of more untrained citizens and criminals.

Mayors and law enforcement across our State oppose this bill. You should, too.

In Ohio, we need laws that will keep people safe. Changing the restrictions on who can obtain a CCW and then allowing anyone to carry is not the way. I ask you to please oppose SB215. Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony with you.