

Ohio House Government Oversight Committee  
Opposition Testimony SB 215  
Monica Harmon

Dear Chairman Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Brown and Committee Members, thank you for allowing me to testify on this important public safety crises.

I am an Ohio homeowner, mother of two young children (one just starting school) and a pediatric Speech Language Pathologist. I strongly oppose SB 215.

I feel you are prioritizing the rights of gun owners who want to carry hidden weapons in our communities over the rights of me and my family. My way of protecting my family is to move away if I see someone with a gun. By making it easier for criminals to concealed carry, you are taking away my right to defend myself and my family. This is unconstitutional and unfair.

I am particularly concerned for our Ohio's children. Gun violence is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for American children in general (twice as many as cancer). Every day, 45 American children are shot. According to the CDC, in Ohio, 63% of the children who are killed by guns die from gun homicide, 37% from suicides and the rest by accidental shootings. We are doing a bad job of protecting our children and families in Ohio. From 2008 to 2017, the rate of gun deaths in Ohio increased by 41% compared to 17% on average for other states during the same time period.

By eliminating gun permits, this bill would end the requirement for any firearm training for conceal carry. It would also eliminate background checks, making it easier for violent criminals to carry a gun. All of these things would contribute to more shootings, both intentional and accidental, around our children.

As our state begins to open up after COVID, our families need to be able to move around our communities confidently without worrying even more about armed criminals shooting people or untrained gun owners mishandling their guns near us. I would be very disappointed in our state for passing this bill.

Reject SB 215!

Thank you,

Monica Harmon