

House Government Oversight Committee  
Opposition Testimony on SB 215  
Submitted by: Erin Dickinson

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

I am the mother of 4 young boys and my husband and I live in Broadview Heights, OH. I strongly oppose SB 215. This bill would end Ohio's current requirements for permits, background checks and any training for Concealed Carry. Experience and research tell us that, while not perfect, background checks do help stop illegal gun sales. In Ohio, since 1998, more than 81,000 gun sales were denied to convicted felons, prohibited domestic abusers, and users of illegal drugs. A study by Boston University found that states without permits and background checks have a 15% higher gun homicide rate than states that do have these laws. Background checks in Ohio could be much more effective if they applied to on-line sales as well. We should close background checks loopholes. We definitely should not eliminate background checks. A poll by USA Survey in 2016 found that 88% of Ohioans agree that our state should keep our background check system.

Furthermore, anyone who conceals and carries a loaded gun in our public spaces should be required to have *at least* the current 8 hours of firearm training. My family has the right to feel safe in our community.

**Gun violence unfairly impacts minority communities throughout Ohio. They experience 10 times the number of gun homicides, 18 times the number of gun assault injuries and nearly 3 times the fatal police shooting of white Americans.** (1) Young men of color, especially, are more likely to be perceived as a threat and shot, either by police, or by an armed citizen.

Ohio's gun violence rate is growing at twice the national average. About 1,500 Ohioans die from gun violence each year. A USA survey in 2016 showed that 88% of Ohioans, including gun owners, approve of

background checks and minimum training requirements for those who carry concealed guns.

**This bill is also Anti-Police.** It would change current law so that if someone is stopped, they will not have to notify the Officer that they are carrying a concealed weapon. SB 215 will make it so the gun owner only has to alert the Officer that they are carrying IF the officer first asks them. This puts the burden will on the officer. Police will have to assume that *everyone* they stop is carrying and will be more “jumpy” and likely to make a fatal mistake. More innocent people will be killed. The Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Buckeye State Sheriffs Association and Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association have all testified against similar laws in the past. SB 215 would even prevent police from even *asking* about suspicious looking guns that are visible. The Police Patrolman’s Association testified last year on a similar bill (SB 178) “...a person could have a car load of AK-47’s and the officer would not be able to question them.” Our Senate should be supporting our police, not making their job harder.

**Even if you amend this bill to exclude the sections pertaining to Duty To Notify, removing requirements for background checks and training bill will cause more deaths in Ohio!** Research by Boston University shows that states without permits and background checks have a 15% higher rate of gun homicide.(2) **There is no good reason to pass this bill!. Please listen to Ohio voters and Vote No on SB 215.**

Thank you,

Erin Dickinson

1. <https://everytownresearch.org/issue/gun-violence-black-americans/>
2. <https://www.bu.edu/bostonia/2019/state-gun-laws-that-reduce-gun-deaths/>