

Testimony on Senate Bill 215
House Government Oversight Committee
March 1, 2022

Submitted by:
Dion Green, Survivor of gun violence,
Dayton, OH

Thank you for allowing me to present my testimony in opposition to SB215. My name is Dion Green. I am a member of Everytown Survivor Network and the Founder and CEO of Flourishing Under Distress Given Encouragement (FUDGE), a nonprofit organization that helps survivors through traumatic experiences with resources and support. I am submitting my testimony as a concerned citizen and a survivor and victim of gun violence after surviving the 2019 mass shooting in Dayton, Ohio. But my father Derrick Fudge did not, and I had to hold him in his last moments as he died in my arms that night, because of a person who had hate in his heart killing a total of 9 people.

I still cannot believe after the shooting we were saying “Do Something,” and I was told by the Governor that he was. But as I am typing you this letter, it is going on 3 years and nothing has been done, except adding more laws to put guns in more people’s hands and with less training. I live in fear every day knowing that an event like that can occur again.

Do you know that trauma that I am still fighting with till this day, because when I see someone carrying a gun not knowing if he or she is angry or just have pure hate in their heart. Will I have to experience another shooting? We have not taken the time to get to the root cause. Because so many people think more guns is the answer to keeping people safe, but if that was the case my father and the other victims would still be living.

There are so many other things in this state that we should be focusing on to make Ohio a safer place, but for some reason we don’t want to address the root causes of gun violence or even add common sense gun laws to encourage responsible gun ownership. I’m especially concerned about how this permitless carry law would interact with the shoot first law, a.k.a. “stand your ground law”, this legislature recently passed. We are basically allowing people to carry hidden, loaded handguns in public without a permit or safety training, and giving them the ok to take the law in their hands and have the ultimate say in who can live or die.

I ask you to reconsider passing SB215 and let's work together to make Ohio a safer place for all. Because being a Black man I am already in fear of my life every day, because so many people get guns in their possession and think they are above the law. The last thing our state needs is to allow people to carry hidden, loaded handguns in public without a permit or safety training.