

Dear Honorable Members of the 13<sup>th</sup> Ohio General Assembly:

On behalf of the citizens of Cincinnati, we are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed law changes in Senate Bill 215 and any legislation that would reduce the current standards for carrying firearms in the State of Ohio.

Public safety is paramount to a strong community, and is a goal that the City of Cincinnati committed to increase every single day. The proposal to repeal Ohio's concealed carry permitting requirements goes directly against the goals of public safety and interferes with the City's ability to create safe, livable communities for all our residents. Our opposition to SB 215 is two-fold: community violence and the safety of our police officers.

First, this legislation is of great concern because the rate of gun violence in our city has increased with the onset of the pandemic, particularly among the City's youth.

This February, the Cincinnati City Council unanimously approved a resolution declaring gun violence a public health crisis.<sup>1</sup> In 2021, there were over 400 victims of gun violence in Cincinnati. Our neighborhoods have asked us to address this crisis so that we can build a safer community for our residents. Permitless concealed carry goes directly against this community priority because it has been linked to higher levels of violence. In addition, states with weaker permitting systems have a 13-15% increase in violent crime.<sup>2</sup>

Second, the proposed legislation puts our police officers further at risk as the proposed bill only requires individuals to disclose that they are armed when they are directly asked by police officers. We value the services and protection provided by Cincinnati Police Officers. They daily stand in harm's way to protect and serve our communities. Permitless carry increases the danger faced by our Officers. The current concealed carry laws protect our communities by keeping those who should not carry concealed weapons from being able to do so. Thousands of concealed carry licenses have been revoked and denied by sheriffs' offices throughout Ohio. There are already few ways to address those who are illegally carrying weapons. Allowing individuals to legally carry a firearm without proper training or a background check removes the few safeguards that protect our communities and our Officers.

Repealing the current concealed carry permitting laws is an action that endangers all the residents of our great state, and especially those people who stand in service and protection of our communities. We sincerely hope that you choose to vote against this Bill and urge each and every member of the Ohio General Assembly to stand in favor of public safety and in opposition to SB 215.

Respectfully Submitted,

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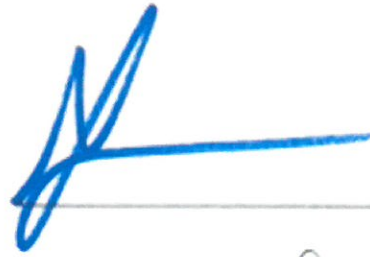
<sup>1</sup> <https://cincinnati.oh.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5392536&GUID=3B542F55-0716-442B-AFA0-607BC67F57E7&Options=ID|Text|Attachments|&Search=gun+violence+public+health>

<sup>2</sup> Donohue J., Aneja A., and Weber K. "Right-To-Carry Laws and Violent Crime: A Comprehensive Assessment Using Panel Data and a State-Level Synthetic Control Analysis". *National Bureau of Economic Research*. (2018). <https://www.nber.org/papers/w23510.pdf>.

Mosa Joffe

Michael D. Orr

Scotty J. J. J.  
Victoria J. J.



Janet Mildred Lemon (Carney)  
J M C

Reggie Harris