

Ohio House of Representatives Government Oversight Committee
Opposition Testimony SB215
March 1, 2022
Ann Shroyer

Chairman Wilkin, Vice Chair White, and Ranking Member Brown: Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony today. My name is Ann Shroyer and I am writing as a concerned citizen in opposition to SB215. This legislation would expand the ability to carry concealed handguns to certain criminals and people charged with crimes who cannot currently obtain such a license. Ohioans have heard legislators tell us time and again that gun laws only penalize law-abiding citizens. If this is the case then there is no reason to change who may obtain a CCW license. We need laws that will encourage responsible gun ownership. Widening the net of who can carry concealed weapons, when gun violence is increasing in our state, is not a way to diminish gun violence and keep our communities safe.

Concealed carry currently requires a background check and training because it has the potential to be far more 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. Both the Ohio Constitution and the United States Constitution do not guarantee this right. I personally know a CCW holder who talked about the value of the course, especially in teaching about appropriate holsters. I first became active in following gun violence prevention and gun safety legislation after a church volunteer at my son's preschool had his conceal carry holster and loaded handgun fall out of his pants in the preschool gym in front of tiny pre-schoolers and their family members - when the gun stopped spinning, it was aimed at my son's friend. My friend who has a conceal carry permit was able to quickly tell me that this type of holster is known to be problematic, and he had learned that in his CCW course. This CCW holder had 5 decades of firearms experience, including 3 years of being enlisted in the Army and the subsequent marksmanship training, being an excellent shot that I had seen, and STILL found the CCW training valuable.

SB215 would permit Ohioans without any training in the use of guns to carry a concealed handgun and sneak up on others. If a "guns everywhere" concept worked to deter gun violence, then we would not have just finished the second record setting year of homicides in Columbus and cities across the nation. Two children, 6 and 9 years old, were shot and killed in December

last year in Canal Winchester. A 10 year old girl was shot and killed in a car in Toledo 3 weeks ago. I would posit that unfettered access to guns and a lack of secure storage laws led to their murders. This bill will only lead to the murder of more children. I think many of us saw the image of a man with a handgun in the waistband of his pants at the girls state wrestling championships in Hilliard last weekend. This bill seems to advocate for more of that – more untrained gun owners with no responsibility to understand gun laws in the state allowed to conceal carry a weapon. Though I am not certain his firearm would be considered concealed because it was only half in his pants. And yet again, a handgun in a man's pants is a cause for me to stand up and speak in a state house. 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.