



## **Tavia Galonski**

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### **Sponsor Testimony, H.B. 630 | WRITTEN-ONLY House Government Oversight Committee | December 8, 2022**

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Chairman Wilkin, Vice-Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Brown, and my colleagues on the House Government Oversight Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written-only sponsor testimony in support of House Bill 630.

House Bill 630 seeks to repeal Senate Bill 215, the permitless concealed carry legislation which went into effect earlier this year. As you may recall from past hearings in this committee, SB 215 allows Ohioans to concealed carry a firearm without a permit and without any formal training.

Proponents of Senate Bill 215 argued that individuals would still be able to apply for a permit to carry a concealed firearm. While it is prospective gun owners still have the ability to obtain a concealed carry permit if they so choose, there is no incentive to apply for a permit when it is no longer required by law.

Although it is still too early to know the true impacts of the passage of SB 215, we can look to other permitless carry states for insight into how these laws harm communities. Analysis of CDC data revealed that in states that have passed permitless carry laws, gun homicide rates increased by 22% in the three years following the passage of said laws—this is more than twice the 10% increase in gun homicides for the United States as a whole during the same time period<sup>1</sup>. It is clear that the loosening of restrictions on guns only serves to unnecessarily put more lives at risk. Why should we wait to see if Ohio suffers the same fate?

In 2020, less than two years prior to the enactment of SB 215, Ohio saw one of its worst years on record with regard to firearm injury deaths, with the CDC reporting that 1,764 Ohioans died as a result of gunshot wounds<sup>2</sup>. If more Ohioans are able to obtain firearms without proper training or a permit, how can we expect the number of gun-related deaths in this state to decrease?

Requiring a permit and some degree of training to carry a concealed firearm in public is not an unpopular concept in this country. In fact, 88% of Americans believe that individuals who wish to carry a concealed gun should obtain a permit. Moreover, a study conducted by Johns Hopkins University revealed that 83% of gun owners believed that a person legally permitted to carry a

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gvpedia.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/GVPedia-Permitless-Carry-Factsheet-FINAL-1.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/firearm\\_mortality/firearm.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/firearm_mortality/firearm.htm)

concealed firearm should have to pass a test proving their ability to safely and lawfully handle a gun<sup>3</sup>.

Another provision in SB 215 that is particularly alarming is the removal of the duty of a licensed gun owner to notify law enforcement that they are armed during interactions with police. The duty-to-notify measures were in place to ensure the safety of both the officer and the firearm owner. Additionally, the law prohibits officers from detaining, searching, or making any seizures of anyone with a firearm, requiring them to operate under the assumption that the individuals they encounter are law-abiding. The Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio was a vocal opponent of SB 215 when it came through this chamber earlier this year, as it poses a threat to officer safety. House Bill 630 seeks to promote the safety of our law enforcement by restoring their ability to safely stop armed individuals if officers have reason to believe that a person poses a threat to others.

As legislators, we have a duty to keep our constituents safe—and HB 630 is an effort to do just that by restoring commonsense safeguards that ensure that guns do not end up in the hands of untrained, dangerous individuals.

Chairman Wilkin, Vice-Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Brown and members of the House Government Oversight Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to provide written-only testimony in support of this important legislation that will keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people, help law enforcement do their jobs, and make our communities safer.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-gun-violence-prevention-and-policy/archive-2019/pdfs/concealed-carry-of-firearms.pdf>