

Committees

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Ohio Aviation & Aerospace Technology Committee
Business First Caucus

Jessica E. Miranda

Democratic Whip

Good afternoon Chairman Wiggam, Vice-Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today in support of H.B. 360. Thank you also to my joint sponsor, Representative Smith, for working with me on this important piece of legislation that, if enacted, will bring awareness to the increasing tragedies of gun violence.

Gun violence is an increasing epidemic, both nationally as well as here in Ohio. From everyday shootings in shopping malls, schools and places of worship, to retaliatory gun violence in neighborhoods, every American has some experience with gun violence.

On average, an Ohioan is killed with a gun every 5 hours.¹ Firearms are the leading mechanism for suicidal deaths in Ohio, accounting for 54.9% of all cases in 2020.² Rates of gun death have increased to 44% from 2011 to 2020, compared to the 33% increase nationwide. Gun deaths by suicide have also increased by 21% while gun homicides have increased 79% in Ohio. Gun violence also includes those shot with a firearm who have survived. Ohio has the 13th highest rate of gun injuries in the United States. We are ranked 11th in the nation for unintended gun injuries.³ Ohio is one of 29 states who do not have safe storage laws or child access prevention laws.⁴

These deaths and injuries not only come at an incredibly high cost in terms of life and emotional/mental well-being; they also cost us in terms of the American dollar and our economy. Gun violence costs Ohio \$22.3 billion every year. \$493.7 million of those dollars are paid by taxpayer dollars. This means that each Ohioan is paying almost \$2,000 each year for gun violence.

¹ <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-violence-statistics/>

² <https://wonder.cdc.gov/controller/datarequest/D76.jsessionid=11D4137EBA4741717F41C3E7C650>

³ [Gun-Violence-in-Ohio-1.pdf \(everystat.org\)](#)

⁴ <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/child-consumer-safety/child-access-prevention-and-safe-storage/>

The price we are paying for gun violence in our communities and our state is devastatingly high. In order to successfully address these challenges, Ohio must be willing to acknowledge the absolutely devastating impact gun violence has on our children, our families, our businesses, our schools, our communities, our law enforcement, our first responders, and our economy. While we have differing opinions on how to protect our communities and address gun violence, there is no denying that gun violence is a critical issue. H.B. 360 would bring awareness to this issue by designating June as Gun Violence Awareness Month.

Again, thank you to Chairman Wiggam, Vice-Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee for allowing me to give testimony on H.B. 360.



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