

October 4, 2021
Opposition Witness Testimony, SB 185
Veterans and Public Safety Committee - Senator Frank Hoagland
Julie Boetger
Ohio Poor People's Campaign

Dear Senator Hoagland and members of the Veterans and Public Safety Committee,

I am writing today in opposition to SB 185.

The general substance and intent of this legislation is to prohibit any governmental authority in Ohio from preventing the sale or confiscation of firearms, ammunition, or other deadly weapons under any lawful circumstances. Those prohibitions include any disaster, war, act of terrorism, civil disorder, public health crisis or any other kind of emergency. If through any governmental individual action, local ordinance or any other rule or regulation this statute would be violated, the aggrieved person can file a civil suit for damages and other expenses. Besides being a horrible stand-alone bill, it does have ramifications for people doing peaceful protesting.

General prohibition examples which would stifle peaceful protest

Example: Any group holding any kind of peaceful protest or march could be subject to being surrounded or intimidated by people there with guns, explosives, or other deadly weapons. If the police or other governmental officials seek to take those guns etc. from the individuals for the sake of safety, those officials could be legally sued for damages and other forms of relief. If there is anything that resembles violence or overreaction by the protests against those with the weapons and those with weapons choose to use them, they would almost certainly claim a “stand your ground defense.”

I feel this bill violates our first amendment rights, and I am urging a NO vote for this bill and ANY bills that would stifle peaceful protest.