

Government Oversight Committee
Opposition Testimony to HB 51: 2nd Amendment Sanctuary Bill
Submitted by Lorrie Levensgood

Dear Chairman, Ranking Member, and committee members, thank you for allowing me to testify on this bill.

I am writing in regards to HB 51 which I strongly oppose. My name is Lorrie Levensgood. I have taught in Ohio schools for 34 years as an intervention specialist. I am deeply distressed that this bill would nullify federal gun laws that are designed to make us safer. This will put more Ohio families, including children, in danger as they go about the daily activities of working, shopping, eating out, etc.

Ohio's 2nd amendment rights are already more than enough protected! We already have more guns in our country than we have people. What is NOT protected are the rights of average Ohioans to life and safety. Ohio, is experiencing a gun violence epidemic. According to the CDC, the rate of gun deaths has increased **52%** from 2012 to 2021 in Ohio, compared to a **39%** increase nationwide.

This bill will nullify existing and future federal gun safety laws, like background checks, age limits for owning AR-15s and Red Flag laws. It will allow more people who should not have guns to carry them. Research by the Harvard University's T.H. Chan School of Public Health clearly shows that states that have looser gun laws have higher rates of gun violence.

I'm especially concerned the about impact of this bill on women. Under current **federal** law, people convicted of abuse cannot concealed carry. If this bill passes, the federal law will be nullified and Ohio's state law will apply instead. State law only disqualifies abusers from carrying a gun if they are convicted of **Felony** abuse. To be a **Felony** charge they must have caused "serious physical harm-like incapacity, disfigurement or injury causing prolonged intractable pain" [ORC 2901.01(A)(5)]. So as long as the victim can

recover from their injuries, like broken bones, it's only a **Misdemeanor** and the abuser could still carry a gun. But these abusers certainly should not be carrying guns either.

It's clear that the authors of this bill care more about the 2nd Amendment than they care about women and families in Ohio. Believe me, voters are taking note!

This bill is too extreme! Please stop HB 51 from going any further.

Thank you,
Lorrie Levengood

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. WONDER Online Database, Underlying Cause of Death. 2018 to 2021.