

Government Oversight Committee
Opposition Testimony HB 51
By Linsey Wyckoff

To the Chair, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to House Bill 51.

I am a young professional living in Stark County. I work for a non-profit organization that provides school supplies to schools in underserved communities. I oppose HB 51. I'm writing to you because I always worry about the students we serve. I also had a player I worked with get shot and killed in a road rage incident. I've seen the devastation of gun violence in these kid's schools and their communities.

The Second Amendment does not need more protection in Ohio! You, our legislators have passed a flurry of pro-gun bills over the last few years. Despite the state's gun homicide rate increasing 94% over the past decade, you recently passed a dangerous Shoot First law, eliminated the requirement for permits and safety training to concealed carry concealed in public and chose to allow K-12 schools to arm teachers. [1]

By allowing our state legislators to nullify federal gun safety laws, this bill will further increase gun violence in our communities. By ignoring the federal "Disqualification" list, It will allow more people who should not have guns to carry them.

I'm especially concerned about the bill's impact on women and children. Under current federal law, people convicted of abuse are disqualified from concealed carrying a gun. HB 51 would weaken the restrictions on abusers concealed carrying a gun. Guns magnify the power and control of the abuser and abusers with firearms are five times more likely to kill their female victims. [2] Tragically, one of the most common ways that children are shot is during a domestic dispute that escalates to gun violence. Even if the child is not actually shot, I have seen the trauma they experience from having watched one parent shoot the other. I think the rights of these women and children are just as important as the rights of gun owners.

This bill will have tragic consequences for our communities. Stop HB 51!

Thank you,
Lindsey Wyckoff

1. <https://everytownresearch.org/rankings/state/ohio/>
2. Jacqueline C. Campbell et al, "Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships....", American Journal of Public Health, 93, no. 7, July 2003