

Committee Chair Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Forhan and Committee Members:

My name is Mary van Balen, and I am a concerned citizen. I am writing to ask you to please oppose HB51. It is particularly dangerous for women. According to Everytown's research, each month 70 women are shot and killed by an intimate partner. Nearly 1 million report they have been shot or shot at by an intimate partner. HB51 will allow an abuser convicted of domestic violence or under a domestic violence restraining order to be deemed a qualifying adult (ORC sec. 2923.111(A)(2)(B) who can carry a concealed firearm without a permit. This bill also puts our law enforcement in greater danger since domestic violence calls are often the most dangerous for police. With gun ownership and gun violence increasing in our state, I'm angry that the sponsors of this bill feel that protecting women and law enforcement is not a priority as this bill demonstrates. As Justice Scalia said, in the Heller case "Like most rights, the right secured by the Second Amendment right is not unlimited.... [It is] not a right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever and for whatever purpose." While 2022 statistics are not available, 2021 witnessed 1,762 gun deaths in Ohio according to data from the Ohio Department of Health. I ask that you protect Ohioans, especially women and law enforcement by opposing HB51.

Respectfully,

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