

Chair Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Forhan, and members of the Government Oversight Committee:

My name is Cordelia Van der Veer, and I am a student at The Ohio State University. As citizens of Ohio, we all care about keeping “the heart of it all” safe for everyone. However, in an average year, 1,702 Ohioans are shot and killed. Based on a report from the CDC, gun violence costs Ohio \$22.3 billion each year, of which \$493.7 million is paid by taxpayers.

Instead of solving these issues, HB 51 would only exasperate the epidemic of gun violence. The legislation will undermine the rule of law and send a false message to criminals that federal gun laws will not be enforced. In other states that have passed similar policies — most recently in Missouri — law enforcement has expressed that the policy has made it much more difficult for state and local law enforcement to do their jobs.

HB 51 would also allow abusers convicted of domestic violence or under domestic violence restraining order to conceal a firearm without a permit. This would make Ohio an even more dangerous place for victims of domestic violence who live every day in fear.

Please consider the students, law enforcement, domestic violence survivors, and innocent Ohioans who will face the impacts of HB 51 and vote no.

Best,

Cordelia Van der Veer
Student at The Ohio State University