

My name is Dr. Amrita Karve, cardiologist and Co-Director of the Women's Heart Program at Mount Carmel Health system in Columbus, Ohio. As a physician and public health advocate, I personally oppose House Bill 51.

As a resident of Victorian Village/Harrison West in Columbus, Ohio, frequenting the shops on High Street is a pastime of mine. We love the thriving, walkable neighborhood in which we live. However, after the rash of recent shootings in my neighborhood, for me personally, this has all changed. My decision to avoid High Street at busy times is not freedom. My neighborhood is home to many small business owners of shops on High street and other local franchises who also fear their own safety at work. Preventing my children from attending a fourth of July parade on Neil Avenue and Halloween due to fear of mass shootings is not freedom. The lawlessness introduced by house bill 51 (which would make Ohio exempt from national gun safety measures) is also not freedom.

This bill would expose Ohio political subdivisions employing law enforcement officers to civil suits and fines of \$50,000 per incident for enforcing federal gun regulations in the state, bar the state from hiring qualified, former federal law enforcement officers who in the past had enforced federal gun regulations, and would fuel anti-government sentiment and encourage violence. This does not inspire hope for safety in our state. The police and city have already promptly taken some measures to address the uptick of violence in the Short North. Let's let them do their jobs.

We are so grateful to your commitment to this country and to the residents of Ohio. Your recent commitments to the health of our community have been commendable. Thank you, Representative Scott Oelslager for your violent crime reduction bill; thank you, representative Sharon Ray for legislation regarding selling alcohol to minors; thank you Bill Seitz for your recent bills to protect senior citizens. Unlike these bills, HB51 is not consistent with the commitment to the health and safety of others. It is a radical bill that would make citizens "above the law" in certain ways, free from the constitution and governance of the United States as it pertains to gun law.

We can all agree that freedom is a value we hold near and dear. Our freedom is a reward we earn every day by respecting the constitution of the United States. And we should feel blessed to be beholden to the laws of our republic. House bill 51 frees Ohio criminals from being subject to national gun laws. The constitution is what makes our country uniquely American, and it is our privilege to respect it.

Thank you,
Amrita Karve, MD