

Opponent Testimony  
House Bill 51  
Mimi Karon  
May 23, 2023

Chair Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Forhan and members of the Government Oversight Committee. My name is Mimi Karon and I am a mother of two young adult children who thankfully do not live in Ohio and will not live here until our lawmakers begin to represent the majority of Ohians - the majority on both sides of the political spectrum that want gun sense legislation in our state. I oppose every piece of HB51 because it's not just dangerous and a bad piece of legislation. It is unconstitutional and your vote could cost taxpayers hard earned money at a time when people are financially struggling across our state.

It is heartbreaking for me to think of women watching this hearing worried about an abusive partner with a restraining order or DV misdemeanor being able to access a firearm. We know that weaponized domestic abusers do not just kill their intimate partner but take the woman's children, co-workers or family members along with the victim. Clearly the sponsors and supporters of this bill now consider domestic abusers to be "law abiding citizens" and "responsible gun owners." Where exactly is the pro-life in this?

I urge the party that backs the men and women in blue to put these words into action. Through the words of others, those in the field such as law enforcement and prosecutors, you have been told in clear terms that this bill will make their jobs more difficult. If this isn't bad enough, HB 51 will also allow illegal guns to remain at large and commit more gun violence. Somewhere, one of those guns is going to end up being used against children, law enforcement, teachers, parents and beloved community members. One of those guns is going to emotionally decimate a community. Most likely, many communities.

The number of people wanting to go into law enforcement is diminishing. I'd like our lawmakers to pass legislation that indeed supports those wanting to go into this incredibly challenging and dangerous profession. HB51 certainly does not do this.

The Missouri law, identical to HB51 was ruled unconstitutional by a Federal Judge in March, 2023. It is reckless for lawmakers to move forward with this legislation. It is indeed unconstitutional. You as lawmakers have the opportunity to prevent Ohioans from being on the hook financially to defend this bill from the multitude of lawsuits that are coming. Violent crime is on the rise not just in urban areas but suburban and rural as well. Violence increases when people are struggling and hurting financially. Our taxes need to go to support organizations that lift people up so crime diminishes. Please consider car theft you have heard about in your suburban areas that never occurred before. This is about financial struggle. It is your duty to help with solutions. Tax money for preventable lawsuits is not the way.

In the proponent hearing in March, I heard more than one disparaging remark against attorneys. I was disgusted. If there were more lawyers in our statehouses, more who understood our Constitution and the meaning behind its clauses and Amendments, the landscape in our legislature would look very different and this bill would not have a hearing.

I ask that you please spare women, law enforcement and all Ohioans from the dangers HB51 presents by opposing this bill. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide my testimony.