

Opposition Testimony HB51

May 22, 2023

Laura Sams

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

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony today. My name is Laura Sams; I am writing as a concerned citizen of Ohio and I am asking you to oppose HB51.

HB51 will make Ohio more dangerous than it already is and it is unconstitutional. States that have passed similar bills are costing taxpayers money while their lawmakers defend this legislation instead of approving bills their constituents want.

HB51 contains vague language which purports to nullify any current or future federal gun laws. Most recently in Missouri, law makers expressed that the policy has made it more difficult for state and local law enforcement to do their jobs. They filed letters of opposition to the bill and a lawsuit was supported by 60 police chiefs in Missouri opposing it too. The Columbus Police Department has begun a high-tech partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to aid in their fight against gun violence. Passing HB51 would most likely nullify the partnership with the ATF and reduce the Columbus Police Department ability to decrease gun violence efforts.

Additionally, NB51 would allow an abuser convicted of domestic violence restraining order to be deemed a "qualifying adult" (ORC sec.2923.111(A)(2)(B) who could carry a concealed firearm without a permit. Such domestic abusers are currently prohibited from permitless carry in Ohio by virtue of current Ohio law which adopts the federal gun disability list. (18 USC sec. 922(g))

On March 7, 2023, a federal judge ruled Missouri's identical bill to Ohio's was unconstitutional and was preempted by the federal government under the U.S. Constitution's supremacy clause. U.S. District Judge Brain Wimes, in his ruling stated "At best, this statute causes confusion among state law enforcement officials who are deputized for federal task operations, and at worst, is unconstitutional on its face."

The majority of Ohioans want gun safety laws enacted in our state, 85% want expanded background checks, 79% support raising the minimum age to buy an AR-15 rifle to 21 and 75% of people approve of "red flag laws." (Ohio May Be Difficult for Gun Control Advocate, But That Won't Stop Their Efforts, wxvu.org 11/2/22)

I ask that you please protect Ohioans and the United States Constitution by rejecting SB51.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laura Sams