

**TESTIMONY OF ANDREA R. YAGODA OPPOSING HB 189
HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE**

Good afternoon Chair Roemer, Vice Chair Lorenz, Ranking member Troy and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee, My name is Andrea R. Yagoda and I have been a resident of Ohio for 49 years, 45 of which I have resided in Delaware County. I am a gun owner and conceal carry permit holder since the inception of the law.

What is the Republican fixation with guns? Why do Republicans think the only Constitutional right is the Second Amendment?

Please do not insult us by saying this bill will make it easier for those less fortunate to purchase a gun. Folks who cannot afford the sales tax on a gun, in all likelihood, cannot afford the price of a gun which, according to the LSC, ranges from \$400-\$800. There are so many other matters that could be addressed to assist the less fortunate but we do not see bills coming out of this legislature to address those.

Want to make it easier for Ohioans to exercise their Constitutional rights? How about the State pick up the tab for all deposits, filing fees and the costs to exercise an Ohioan's right to redress in the courts. How about the state paying the attorney fees of those who want to file an action in court. This legislative body passed a bill providing that the Speaker and President of the Senate could retain private counsel with no limit on the amount of fees to be paid by the taxpayers. Where was the corresponding legislation for taxpayers to provide legal services to the citizens to address redistricting in the Ohio Supreme Court to pursue their Constitutional Rights under Article XI? Their right to redress. Many Ohioans are

foreclosed from doing so because they cannot afford the filing fees, attorney fees and other costs associated with redress.

And how about one's right to a jury trial in Article I Section 5. The exercise of that right is not free either. Want a jury trial? Pay the deposit.

And how about the State's obligation to provide public education for our children. Why are students not provided, free of charge, with all the supplies they need to assist them in getting that education? Things like looseleaf paper, looseleafs, pens, pencils, rulers, art supplies, protractors, calculators, backpacks for their books, etc. Citizens pick up the tab for those less fortunate by having school supply drives. Where is your concern for the less privileged here? At the very least why do they have to pay sales tax for those items? (I know for a limited time and a cap they can purchase without sales tax but the need is ongoing throughout the year) And we know that well nourished children do better in school so what about free, healthy lunches and maybe breakfasts for all our school children?

And guess what? None of the above suggestions will kill anyone.

You call yourselves the party of fiscal responsibility and yet in one year you have cost taxpayers 40 million dollars for two special elections plus the attorney fees incurred in the redistricting litigation. According to the LSC :

*"The bill's SUT exemption of certain personal firearms and ammunition would reduce annual SUT receipts by an amount between **\$23.5 million to \$39.2 million**. Additionally, ongoing law permits counties and local transit authorities to levy a local sales tax; the tax base for permissive taxes is the same as the tax base for the state tax. As such, this exemption would **reduce local tax collections by a combined amount between \$5.9 million and \$9.8 million over a 12-month period**. The state and local revenue losses may grow in future years at a pace that matches inflation."*

And if not enough,

*“The bill will incur a **permanent revenue loss** on behalf of the small arms and ammunition manufacturing credit. It will reduce PIT and CAT receipts by an indeterminate amount as early as FY 2025, depending on future capital investments made in Ohio as a result of the credit. According to codified law, **the Local Government Fund (LGF) and Public Library Fund (PLF) would each bear 1.66% of the tax revenue loss in future years.**”*

Local communities throughout the State are feeling the pinch in their pocketbooks and here you are proposing, for the sake of guns, to hit them even harder. Less money for local communities equates to either local tax levies or reduced services. Both options detrimental to the citizens of Ohio. Really, right now when real estate taxes are increasing for Ohioans you are proposing this?

We have all seen the assault on libraries recently and it appears this is a hit directly on their pocketbooks too. This taxpaying Ohioan would rather have my public libraries fully funded than a sales/use tax exemption for firearms and ammunition. Want to really help Ohioans who are struggling? How about waiving sales tax on necessities? Clothing, shoes and add to that sales tax exemptions on automobiles since you think Ohio has such an abundance of money that we can afford to placate the gun lobby. The very things Ohioans **actually need**. Sales/use tax exemptions on these items would provide a greater benefit to more Ohioans and help those less fortunate. How about fully funding our schools as the less fortunate will not benefit from a voucher program as they cannot afford the price of tuition even with a voucher.

And let us not forget the 10 million tax credit in this bill, the cost of which the LSC cannot even compute but there will be a cost, not just in revenues, but

increased administrative costs for the Ohio Tax Department and the Ohio Tax Credit Authority.

Next you will tell us that the Second Amendment compels the State to provide every newborn in Ohio with a gun.

No, enough is enough. As a taxpayer, a gun owner, a conceal carry permit holder, I find this bill offensive. I am not paying taxes to support the gun lobby and I do not support treating the right to gun ownership over every other right in our Constitution.

I ask this Committee to vote no on this bill.

Andrea R. Yagoda