

Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the health committee, thank you for allowing me to provide testimony in support of funding organizations in Ohio that work to prevent gun violence. My name is Stephanie Baki and I am testifying as a volunteer with Moms Demand Action.

Gun violence, while a known fear among citizens in urban areas, particularly youth, is also rising significantly in rural areas. In fact, Coshocton County has the highest rate of gun deaths, including suicide and homicide, than any other county in our state. <https://everystat.org/#> Communities across our state that were never thought to be at risk of gun violence, in addition to our urban areas, are seeing increased incidents.

Research shows that intervention programs work and we should pay attention to the data. Our lawmakers need to step up and support evidence-based, community-informed violence prevention and intervention programs. These organizations should unequivocally be supported by the Ohio legislature by including such funding in our budget.

I ask that you please do your part to diminish gun violence by supporting funding for prevention efforts.

Please see my Health Witness Slip attached

Thanks, Stephanie Baki