

Testimony on House Bill 248
House Federalism Committee

Submitted by:
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Representative Becker, Vice Chair Stoltzfus, Ranking Member Miller and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to offer testimony in opposition to HB248. I am a suburban mom of three school-aged children and I am deeply troubled by the gun violence epidemic in this country. This is a public health crisis and we should be working together to minimize those killed or injured every year.

The pandemic has exacerbated gun violence in this country. In a presentation by the Whitney/Strong organization, a gun violence prevention organization founded by a survivor of the mass shooting in Cincinnati in 2018, Andy Wilson, a senior advisor for criminal justice policy in the governor's office, shared the following:

"The most up to date information provided compares the first 6 months of 2020 to the first 6 months of 2019. He shared that all major metro areas in Ohio have seen increases. He stated that the eight largest cities in Ohio with populations over 40,000 have all seen gun violence crimes go up by 17% compared to last year."¹

This 173-page sub bill, replacing 6-page bill about *antique guns*, would do nothing to slow the deadly gun violence in this state. These are just a few of its dangerous provisions:

Removing training mandates for armed teachers - This proposal is simply ludicrous. A similar bill (SB 317) has passed the Senate with two proponent testimonies and more than 300 opponent testimonies. The two proponent testimonies were from the NRA and Buckeye Firearms, the gun lobby. Citizens of Ohio are watching and we understand who is represented in the Ohio senate.

Lowering the concealed carry licence from 21 to 18 - This law only further incentivizes young people to commit crimes. There is a slew of data that supports this statement. Though for time's sake, here is one statistic:

- Data suggests that young people disproportionately commit gun homicides. For example, 18-20-year olds comprise just 4% of the US population, but account for 17% of known homicide offenders.²

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<https://dayton247now.com/news/local/ohio-sees-record-increase-in-gun-violence-murder-by-firearms-up-by-27>

² <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/who-can-have-a-gun/minimum-age/>

Stand Your Ground - Several studies have shown homicides rates **increase** when states have Stand Your Ground laws. Ohioans are already protected by the law for defending themselves. There is no “duty to retreat” unless there is a clear and safe way to do so. This law is not about self defense, it is about giving people the ability to kill legally.³

Forcing Guns on Campus - Again, research shows that guns on campus do not make students or staff safer. For a complete study on this subject, please visit this link:

<https://keepgunsoffcampus.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Campus-Crime-Report-4.pdf>. For the short conclusion: The findings suggest that laws allowing concealed weapons on campus are not effective in reducing violent crime rates, especially sexual assault

American’s trust in government has diminished⁴ and it is these types of bills that only further erode trust. Creating a bill about antique guns and then adding all of these unrelated provisions during the lame duck session is, in my opinion, immoral. It is clear, the only reason you are considering this “substitute bill” that has not even been made available to the public yet is because members of this committee don’t believe they can pass these laws under the light of day. The hope is that Ohioans are too busy with the holidays, trying to place food on the table, or suffering from the pandemic to notice. **Sneaky.**

We are watching. We watch because our children’s safety, our communities’ safety, our cities’ safety and our state’s safety matter to us. I am writing this after I made dinner, after ensuring homework is complete, and after having all three children in virtual school all day. I am tired but not tired enough to remain silent about dangerous legislation.

Thank you for reading and please oppose HB248.

³ <https://www.rand.org/research/gun-policy/analysis/stand-your-ground/violent-crime.html>

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<https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2020/09/14/americans-views-of-government-low-trust-but-some-positive-performance-ratings/>