

**Testimony on House Sub Bill 248**  
House Federalism Committee  
December 1, 2020

Chair Becker, Vice Chair Stoltzfus, Ranking Member Miller, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to House Sub Bill 248. My name is Mandy Rothgerber and I'm a resident of Hudson, Ohio. I am a voter. I'm a mom. I'm also appalled that supporters of this bill forced me to drive here today two hours in hazardous conditions during a pandemic to fight a sneaky and dangerous bill that will kill more Ohians.

Isn't it ironic that we are gathered here as Covid numbers increase and the citizens you just so deeply want to serve continue losing their lives to both gun violence and the coronavirus? Chair Becker, your Facebook page has PRO LIFE and PRO GUN written first. I do support the right to own a gun, after all I am a Kentucky native. But I also know that more guns does not mean a safer society. If this were true then America would be the safest place in the world. You read the news. You know Americans' chances of death by gun are 1000 times higher than in any other country.

Sub HB248 contains too many dangerous provisions to go through them all. First, as a mother I'd like to know how it makes any logical sense to allow more people to carry deadly weapons in schools, especially without minimum training requirements. How will my 15 y/o be safer being around a teacher with a gun? 16 y/o Josephine L. wants me to remind proponents of this bill that some teachers can't even do the one job they are trained for. Why give them another job they are unprepared for? Also, why push to get guns in the hands of 18-year-olds, especially now as our youth grapple with depression from isolation during Covid?

Along with lowering the age to acquire a concealed weapons permit, this bill would prohibit public universities from restricting concealed carry among students. John Hopkins University's study states this will likely lead to an increase in gun violence and suicides. College kids already participate in reckless behavior at times, why do you want to support these kids' already impulsive behaviors? You may as well be present in every dorm room, at every party and fight that breaks out in every desperate moment and hand over a gun and tell our children to shoot. Just shoot. According to proponents of extreme gun bills like this one, guns solve all the problems. I witnessed such impulsive and angry behavior last time I was here and testified. A member of a gun extremist group was here and laughed about victims of gun violence in the next room, and then was so angry I called him out that he barged in the room behind me while I was giving my testimony. I had to be escorted to my car by security because of him and warnings from others present. I did not know this was even happening until I watched my testimony at home that night in June. The agitation. The hatred. The belief there should be a certain "order" if you will when people like him are the reason our society suffers so. When we fail to show empathy and truly work at finding solutions to our sick society all of us will suffer. Ultimately you are allowing the cancer of gun violence to grow and fester and claim lives rather than genuinely being pro life and delving into how we once and for all heal a country consumed by gun violence.

Oh, and lastly, supporters of this bill want to allow business owners to shoot someone who makes them nervous? In an already racist society how do you think this will impact black and brown people? I believe you know the answer yet don't appear to care. A primary consequence of strengthening such "self defense" laws is increased homicides. Whites who murder black people in stand your ground states are more likely to be "justified" in their killings (emphasis on quote unquote "justified"). Which of you white lawmakers would be willing to trade spots with a black or brown person as a, say, social experiment.....? Raise your hand if you want to be treated like a black man, a black woman.....any person of color. I'll wait.

In closing may I just say that pro life looks a lot different to me than to people who try and push guns on people. Pro life is empathy for your fellow man. Pro life is not refusing to wear masks and mocking lives lost to guns and covid....pro life is not exploiting religion to benefit your racist deadly agendas. Once the powers that be who support looser gun laws are willing to stop and admit their wrongdoing by the citizens they are supposed to serve, maybe then you will end this dance and gain a page in history that shows what true leadership looks like. You have failed by forcing us here today but it is not too late to do right by me and ALL OHIOANS. Please oppose HB248.