

Criminal Justice Committee  
Opposition Testimony HB 99 and Sub Bill HB 99  
from Jessica Hubbard

Dear Chairman LaRe and Members of the Committee

I am an Ohio resident and voter. I'm also a kindergarten teacher working in a public school in Northeast Ohio. I am writing because I strongly oppose HB 99 and its latest Sub Bill. The Sub Bill would reduce training of armed adults in schools from the current requirement of 700+ hour to fewer than 30 hours, only a few of which may involve actually firing weapons. A School Board could choose to "authorize" their friends, community members, teachers, coaches, etc. The bill specifies that these people cannot be hired security guards. They would not report to any employer in the school system, then. *Basically, they would be vigilantes, making their own decisions on when to shoot a student or adult visitor to the school.* This makes me very worried.

I urge you to reject HB 99 in order to ensure the safety of your constituents. Allowing civilians to carry guns in schools is a safety hazard for students and staff. Introducing more guns in schools increases the risk of gun violence, even if accidental. There have been many documented instances of guns being discharged by school staff on school grounds and guns being misplaced or stolen and ending up in the hands of students. We cannot allow for this risk in our schools. As an early childhood educator, the safety of public school students is of utmost importance to me. However, research shows that the safety and overall well-being of students increases when they have access to mental health professionals and supportive classroom environments. According to the Rand Study There is no evidence that armed security officers in schools increase school safety, let alone armed civilians with minimal training. [1]. Personally, I do not feel comfortable with firearms in my classroom and I believe that my students and their families feel the same way. Research shows that the presence of armed security officers may actually be harmful to students.[2] This risk of harm would surely increase by arming civilians in schools. Because of this, I feel strongly that we should not put resources towards arming school staff, especially when schools already have limited safety resources for students including mental health professionals. I strongly urge you to Reject HB 99.

Respectfully,  
Jessica Hubbard

1. [The Effects of Laws Allowing Armed Staff in K–12 Schools, April 22, 2020](https://www.rand.org/research/gun-policy/analysis)  
[https://www.rand.org › research › gun-policy › analysis](https://www.rand.org/research/gun-policy/analysis)
2. [Security guards in school: Kids feel less safe, unclear effect on ...](https://www.washingtonpost.com/work/2012/12/21)  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com › work › 2012/12/21](https://www.washingtonpost.com/work/2012/12/21)