

Testimony Opposing HB 227
House Government and Oversight Committee
Submitted by
Ariel Miller

Chair Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Sweeney, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to HB 227, which would allow people to carry concealed, loaded handguns in public without requiring them to have a concealed handgun license or training. My name is Ariel Miller. I am a Christian voter, mother, and grandmother in Cincinnati, Ohio. My training is in public health, I am married to an Ohio physician who did part of his training in a shock-trauma unit, and I had to develop active shooter response plan for my church in Wyoming, Ohio.

Since I wrote to you in opposition to this bill in June, the level of polarization and anger in Ohio has risen even higher. I go to church in Wyoming, with a school board member who has been viciously verbally attacked in public for her vote in favor of mandatory masking to keep students safe from a deadly pandemic when many are still too young to be vaccinated. The local police chief decided to post an officer at the exit of the building when the school board meets so that school board members can get to their cars safely. The *Cincinnati Enquirer* has run several articles about the increasing volume of threats against local people serving on school boards or public health departments. To allow people to carry concealed weapons without a license or training will make the chance of death or casualties even greater than it was in June.

Every day we hear news of shooting deaths in the United States. Americans understand the need for training and licenses to drive cars or trucks, and to be allowed to provide many professional services from health care to cutting hair. My husband is proud to complete continuing education annually, and to pay a substantial fee to renew his Ohio medical license. The need for safety training and a license is incredibly important for people using guns, which are lethal weapons. The only people who will benefit from this proposed legislation is criminals.

My brother-in-law was an avid marksman with a large collection of handguns and rifles. He was fiercely libertarian, but he was proud to have completed the training necessary to have a concealed-carry permit. I also remember talking about a previous version of this bill a couple of years ago with a grandmother who lives in a Cincinnati neighborhood afflicted by a lot of gun violence. She has a handgun for self-defense, but she is very glad to have the training to use it properly. She told me she was shocked and disgusted that members of the State Legislature were considering a bill to allow concealed-carry without a permit.

Please work on bills to make Ohioans safer, instead of proposals like HBB 227, that will increase the danger they already face, as we've seen in the recurring nightmare of Americans being

gunned down in the places at the heart of our ordinary weekly routines, including houses of worship, schools, grocery stores, and movie theaters.

Thank you for reading my testimony.

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