

House Government Oversight Committee
Opposition Testimony HB 227

Submitted by:
Tony D'Ambrosio

Chair Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Sweeney and committee members:

My name is Tony D'Ambrosio and I live in the current state Senate district 8 and current state House district 28. My educational and professional background is in healthcare and public health. I have three children: two on high school campuses and one on a college campus. Given the increase in school shootings and the pervasive gun violence in the United States, responsible firearm ownership and gun violence prevention is very important to me. According to a March 2016 survey, 90 percent of Ohio voters support requiring a permit to carry a concealed handgun in public. Ohio law must require those who carry concealed firearms to pass a criminal background check, complete safety training, complete live-fire shooting exercises, and be a resident of the state. We also must provide law enforcement the authority to deny permits to people who pose a danger to the public. Legislation in Ohio should promote responsible gun ownership and ensure core public safety standards when people carry concealed guns in public places. HB227 would put Ohio children, families, and communities at risk by allowing people to carry hidden, loaded handguns in public without a permit or safety training. Eliminating Ohio's concealed handgun license requirement would allow people with dangerous histories and those without any firearm safety training to carry loaded handguns in crowded town centers and on city streets. We require military and law enforcement officers to receive training for handling and discharging firearms. This provides for the safety of those possessing firearms and for the safety for those around them. We will not increase public safety by allowing untrained citizens to carry concealed firearms. The likelihood of an accidental discharge or an errant shot will increase with the lack of required training to carry a concealed weapon. Current Ohio law requires that applicants for concealed handgun licenses must complete a safety training course that includes live-fire training. HB227 would allow people who have never handled a gun before to carry hidden, loaded handguns on our streets. Under current Ohio law, applicants who have recently been convicted of a violent misdemeanor will be denied a concealed handgun license. HB227 would allow these criminals to carry hidden, loaded handguns throughout the state. Under current Ohio law, law enforcement authorities must deny concealed handgun licenses to applicants who have been convicted of crimes involving the possession, use, or sale of a drug of abuse. HB227 would allow many of these individuals to carry hidden, loaded handguns throughout Ohio communities. By eliminating any requirement for a concealed handgun license, this bill would make it impossible for police to determine if a person with a concealed gun was legally carrying it, and thus could result in police unknowingly letting people illegally carrying concealed guns continue to carry them. There is recent research demonstrating that permitless concealed carry laws have led to a rise in gun violence. Per an article in American Journal of Public Health by Michael Siegel et al., states that have weakened their firearm permitting system have experienced an 11 percent increase in handgun homicide rates. A 2018 study published by the National Bureau of Economic Research found a 13-15 percent increase in violent crime rates as a result of permitless carry laws. We need to promote safe, secure, responsible gun ownership in Ohio. Reducing requirements to carry concealed weapons does not make Ohioans safer. Education, training, and safety requirements are pervasive in multiple areas of society. Healthcare, law enforcement, vehicle operation, food service, recreational activities, etc., etc., etc. All employ common sense well researched guidelines to promote safe, responsible practices by its citizens. We need to implement common sense well researched policies and legislation when it comes to carrying a concealed weapon. Thank you for considering my testimony. Please vote no on HB227.