

Government Oversight Committee  
Opposition Testimony on HB 227  
Alicia Goddard

Chairman Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Sweeney and Committee Members, thank you for allowing me to testify.

I am writing as a concerned citizen in opposition to HB 227. It is my understanding that if passed HB 227 would allow anyone 21 and over to carry concealed handguns including certain criminals and people charged with crimes who cannot currently obtain such a license. Ohioans have heard legislators tell us time and again that gun laws only penalize law-abiding citizens. Well, as a naturalist in our country's state parks I have seen guns found on the side of trails, guns left unattended in campsites and stolen, guns that got delivered with the hay never to be seen by the law-abiding citizen ever again. I also lived through a neighborhood lockdown where the law-abiding citizen forgot to take his medication and threaten to kill himself and others. My roommate also found a gun in the backyard while mowing the lawn. People are people and, law abiding or not, people who do not have incentives to treat their guns with the utmost care lose their guns. Permits are hopefully designed to show who has passed the test to own a gun. You have the permit, you're good to go. No permit, no gun. Find a gun, turn it in because you do not have a permit. Don't turn it in and get caught without the required permit then you're in trouble. Gun laws need to hold gun owners responsible, and act as a tracking system to help law enforcement know who should have a gun and who shouldn't. Law-abiding citizens do not mind obtaining a CCW license because they understand the huge responsibility that comes with gun ownership. We need laws that will encourage responsible gun ownership. Widening the net of who can carry concealed

weapons, when gun violence is increasing in our state, is not a way to diminish gun violence and keep our communities safe.

In addition, HB 227 would permit Ohioans without any training in the use of guns to carry a concealed handgun. Handguns require more skill to use properly than a car and are at least as lethal. According to The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (June 3, 2020), there were 38,680 fatalities from car crashes. Roughly 35,000 people are killed by guns every year. Yet prior to obtaining a driver's license, Ohio law includes classroom time, on the road practice with an instructor, 50 hours of on the road experience with a licensed citizen as well as a written test and driving exam, over a minimum of six months. I've not heard of any legislation changing the requirement of obtaining a driver's license to zero hours and no exams. And that's for the sake of safety on the road. Legislation regarding concealed carry and who may obtain a license should be about safety. Not about rushing to put guns in the hands of more citizens and criminals.

It is of little surprise that data from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control show that states with the lowest rates of overall gun death in the nation are those with the strongest gun violence prevention laws and low rates of gun ownership. The inverse is also true, the states with the weakest gun violence prevention laws have the most gun related deaths. Eighty eight percent of Americans support gun permits. Required training lowers the risk of an untrained individual of harming themselves, their family, and their community.

I urge you to vote NO on HB 227. Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony with you.

Alicia Goddard