

Testimony Opposing House Bill 227
House Government Oversight Committee

Submitted by:
Robin Hawkins

Chair Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Sweeney and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to HB 227. I am writing to you today as the mother of a police lieutenant and grandmother of six Ohio children. I have lived in rural Medina Ohio for the last 35 years and support the second amendment. I advocate for **responsible gun ownership** which should **ALWAYS** include training and proficiency in safe storage and usage. I **oppose** this bill because it will make **ALL** Ohioans less safe.

Forgoing the permitting process arms people **who have not demonstrated any competence or training** who then 1) have a **false** sense of security, erroneously believing they can now protect themselves anywhere they go and 2) interject themselves into situations with a firearm which should be **entrusted to trained law enforcement**. In states where similar legislation has passed **gun violence and deaths** have dramatically **increased**.

My son and every police officer **must demonstrate proficiency** with his firearm **4 times/year** and they are **required to participate successfully in scenario training** to protect the public in a variety of “active shooter situations” so that the officers can practice and learn how to best protect bystanders. This practice is necessary even for seasoned officers as it presents them with multiple simulated life-threatening encounters and the often negative and unanticipated consequences of action choices **without endangering anyone**. This remote preparation helps them remain calm and to act appropriately in real crises.

Unfortunately the “good guy with a gun” who may show up “ready” to shoot has **not** had any of this training and **now confronts the professional responders with yet another armed individual to assess**. Mistaken for the perpetrator, they are deadly distractions that can and have frequently become targets themselves.

While the current permitting process includes only minimal safety and proficiency training, HB227 would send armed people into public places with **no training at all**.

Most (88%) Americans believe that a permit should be required for a person to carry a concealed, loaded firearm. Permits require essential background checks, live-fire training and provide law enforcement with documentation to verify both. **It is unconscionable to erode public safety by dropping these requirements with more first-time gun owners than ever before.**

As elected officials empowered to protect the citizens of Ohio, **you have a duty to base your decisions on facts, data and the testimony of experts, including law enforcement experts who oppose Permitless Carry**. I hope you can rise to the occasion and defeat this bill.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Robin Hawkins