

House Government Oversight Committee  
Opposition Testimony HB 227

Submitted by:  
Marian Harris

Chairman Wilkin, Vice Chairman White, Ranking Member Sweeney and members of the House Government Oversight Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Marian Harris and I am a former State Representative, serving from 2009 to 2010. After leaving the Legislature I worked for several Gun Safety organizations and am passionate about reducing the number of violent gun incidents we currently see in our country.

I am strongly opposed to HB 227 because I believe that this bill, if passed, will lead to even more violent gun deaths and injuries. I am tired and saddened every morning to read the Dispatch with my coffee and learn about 2 or more killings or shootings in Columbus every day.

To think that someone could carry a gun with no training belies common sense. I am sure that you have heard all the statistics about gun violence but I am going to repeat some of them because they are irrefutable. References are available upon request.

States that have passed permitless carry legislation are experiencing a substantial increase in gun violence.

States that have weakened their firearm permitting system have experienced an 11% increase in handgun homicide rates.

States that have weakened their firearms permitting system have experienced a 13-15% increase in violent crime rates.

Permitless carry laws strip away current training requirements. Lack of training has resulted in many “accidental” shooting of innocent or unarmed bystanders.

Permitless carry laws strip away background checks that screen out violent criminals and domestic offenders.

88% of Americans think you should get a permit before carrying a concealed gun in public.

Over 80% of gun owners, non-gun owners, Republicans, Democrats and Independents agree that high safety standards are critical in issuing concealed carry permits.

Live-fire training is critical to making sure that people who carry guns in our state know how to load and fire that weapon properly and safely. When someone wants to get a license to drive a car, they have to prove they can operate a vehicle safely. It would be ludicrous to give someone a driver's license after only watching an online video. A handgun carry permit should be no different.

Please vote no on this dangerous bill to keep our children, our neighbors, our citizens safe.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.