

Witness Information Form

Please complete the Witness Information Form Before testifying:

Date: October 10, 2021

Name: Betsy Mitchell

Are you representing yourself? Yes

Organization: Individual

Position/Title: NA

Address: 234 Washington Street

City: New Richmond State: OH Zip: 45157

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Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes

Business before the committee

Legislation: (Bill/Resolution Number) 227

Specific issue: Permitless Carry

Are you testifying as a: Opponent Yes

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes

How much time will your testimony require? 15 minutes

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

As a competitive shooter, gun owner, and gun collector I oppose HB 227 which allows permitless concealed carry in Ohio. As a gun owner, I understand the importance of safety and arms training, not allowing felons and criminals to avoid arrest when found with concealed weapons, and I stand with law enforcement to keep naive gun owners and citizens from harm.

I understand that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.

My apologies for not reading this in person. I am out of state and cannot return in time to testify. Thank you for reading this.

I oppose HB 227 that allows any person to carry a concealed weapon without a concealed weapons license. I oppose any law that restricts law enforcement to take deadly weapons out of the hands of criminals, takes away an important tool for them to arrest and disarm someone who is illegally, by current statutes, carrying a deadly weapon. Eliminating these statutes, endangers law enforcement when they approach a suspicious driver.

These additions that this bill suggests are dangerous to law enforcement. It is simply irresponsible to put our protectors in harm's way.

I am a competitive shooter, a gun owner, and a gun collector. I have worked for gun dealers to sell guns at gun shows and shops. I have had thousands of hours of training in gun safety, gun smithing, and shooting at competitions. Yet, I know that I would need to have more training to develop the skills needed to respond to an emergency situation. Targets do not shoot back.

This bill puts guns in the hands of untrained persons who are not prepared to do what they think they can - protect themselves and their family. It does put their family and the people that protect them, law enforcement, in danger.

I know the importance of training in order to handle and store a gun safely, maintain a gun in proper working condition, and shoot in an active environment in gun competitions. Guns are not intuitive; no one is born knowing how to handle guns safely. Guns are not easy to handle. Neglective maintenance and improper storage can easily end up in guns jamming, exploding, or misfiring.

This bill allows guns in the hands of people who may not know how to properly handle them because of lack of training. Every year thousands of people are shot or killed in accidents while handling guns.

When I go to a range for a competition there are strict safety rules on handling your gun. Shooters are not allowed to carry a concealed gun and it must be stowed correctly in their car. All guns must be transported, unloaded, in a cover, holster, or harness until they get to the shooting bench. There is a safety officer standing next to them who gives them instructions when they may take the gun out, load it and put their finger on the trigger. The safety officer follows them throughout the competition. When done, the safety officer instructs them when to unload the gun, they check to see if it is unloaded and watch them put the gun back into its cover. Safety is paramount. Any infraction of the rule, the shooter can be asked to stow the gun and leave the range.

These are trained shooters, yet they follow strict safety rules to keep everyone at the competition safe in a situation where there is active shooting in five or more stages.

This bill does not address safety, again, putting citizens and law enforcement at risk.

I have worked with law enforcement officers, SWAT, police departments, ICE, and other federal agencies to organize a charity competition to earn money for Christmas for Kids. I have many friends in law enforcement. I do not want them hurt or killed. By eliminating the rule that someone stopped has to tell the officer that they have a firearm puts my friends and others protectors at risk. I stand with them to oppose this bill.

This bill puts law enforcement at risk; potentially deadly risk. It limits their effectiveness to take guns from criminals and dangerous persons.

During the readings of other testimonies today and in the past, you have heard testimony from persons opposing this bill. You have heard the statistics of people shot accidentally. Worse, you have heard the statistics of children killed because someone mishandled a gun. You have listened to law enforcement's objections.

I cannot fathom why any responsible legislature would approve this bill when it puts their constituents and law enforcement in deadly danger.