

Testimony on House Bill 227

House Government and Oversight Committee

October 9, 2021

Submitted by:

Meghann Naveau

Chair Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Sweeney and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to provide testimony (again) in opposition to House Bill 227.

When I wrote in opposition to this bill for its previous hearing, I shared that I am a business owner, parent, and lifelong Ohioan, growing up in a small, rural town and now residing in Bellbrook.

I told you I support the right of Ohioans to own guns and bear arms. I am not against guns. But, I do have concern that permitless carry, as outlined in HB 227, will put our children, families, and communities at risk by allowing people to carry hidden, loaded handguns in public without a permit or safety training. I am not alone in this concern, as 88% (an overwhelming majority!) of Americans think a person should get a permit before carrying a concealed handgun in public.¹

I also have concerns about what this bill means for our businesses, including:

- Customers will not feel safe shopping/doing business with other people carrying loaded firearms, especially when this bill includes no provision to ensure those people carrying have had proper training.
- Families may no longer feel safe taking their children to businesses where firearms are openly carried, thus inflicting emotional distress to families and loss of revenue for businesses.
- Some business owners might feel the need for armed security guards, an expense they would prefer not to have.
- Effects on the stress level of any security personnel who now have concerns about untrained, armed customers.

I fail to see what solution this bill aims to solve, other than putting guns directly into the hands of untrained people, further putting our families, law enforcement and business owners at risk. Earlier this year, Attorney General Yost wrote, "By any measure, Ohio's concealed carry licensing system has succeeded in combining safeguards that protect the public and provisions that uphold Americans' right to bear arms and protect themselves."² Why is permitless carry necessary when it seems current legislation is working?

¹ Ingham K. "New Survey Finds Strong Opposition to Concealed Carry without a Permit". Strategies 360. (2015). <https://every.tw/2tSNDyq>.

² [https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Files/Reports/Concealed-Carry-Annual-Reports-\(PDF\)/2020-CCW-Annual-Report](https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Files/Reports/Concealed-Carry-Annual-Reports-(PDF)/2020-CCW-Annual-Report), p. 3.

I value the role of the legislature to protect the rights of our citizens, and we cannot limit those protections to only the loudest, most wealthy, or most well-armed among us. You took an oath to serve all the citizens of Ohio, and **Ohio voters overwhelmingly support the current law regarding concealed carry. According to a March 2016 survey, 90 percent of Ohio voters support requiring a permit to carry a concealed handgun in public.**³

Please help to protect all Ohioans. Oppose HB 227.

Sincerely,

Meghann Naveau

³ Survey USA Survey, March 2016.