

Testimony on House Bill 62

House State and Local Government Committee

June 9, 2021

Submitted by: Cynthia Richards

Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to House Bill 62.

Just this past week, six individuals in Springfield, Ohio—my hometown—were shot while attending a celebration of life on S. Yellow Springs Road. Fortunately, none of the six individuals were killed, but this event is just one of the more visible examples of the threat gun violence poses to my community, and increasingly poses to my community since the loosening of gun legislation in Ohio. We cannot celebrate life in our community without the fear of death, and without facing an increased risk of death that strongly correlates with a series of gun bills that make it easier to buy and use a gun in violent encounters. Many of our representatives falsely promised that this legislation would make us feel safer. I can say without hesitancy that most people in my community do not feel safer because of these laws. I know I do not.

Now, the proposed House Bill 62 would further imperil lives in my community by making Ohio a so-called “safe haven” for those who violate federal gun laws. This legislation would put at risk the lives of my neighbors and the police officers sworn to protect them. In a sign of just how wrongheaded this legislation, police officers could be fired for enforcing the laws! More broadly, it would undermine the rule of law that is essential to sustaining a civil society and that allows all of us to celebrate life without fear of losing our lives. I believe in responsible gun ownership, but these laws encourage those who do not believe in responsible gun ownership to seek harbor in our state. This puts my family and families in

Ohio at risk. Please vote against House Bill 62 and protect the safety and security of people in my hometown of Springfield, and of hometowns across Ohio.