

**Testimony on House Bill 62**  
**House State and Local Government Committee**  
**June 9, 2021**

Submitted by:  
Kevin Weinbrecht

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

My name is Kevin Weinbrecht. I am submitting testimony today in opposition to House Bill 62, an ambiguous bill that puts our police and sheriffs in an unsettling position of being sued or losing their jobs if they follow federal laws, or use federal help in solving crimes that involve firearms. This bill is an emotional reaction to the unceasing message that “the government” is planning to confiscate weapons.

I am a lifelong Ohio resident. I take pride in my state citizenship for many reasons, from sports and presidents, to the fact that Ohio has always been a political bellwether. I have never imagined moving anywhere else. How can you get better than a state that offers all 4 seasons, great sports, great food and what some have said, “the friendliest people” in the country. I was proud that my grandchildren would grow up in Ohio, but now I am afraid that they will leave this state at first opportunity because on any given day, in any given season the sound of heavy weaponry can be heard near and far in our county. This is not the Ohio of my youth. Growing up in Clark County, guns were used by the military, the police and hunters. We were awed and amazed at the sonic booms of jets flying out of the Wright Patterson Air Force base. Now, booms, bangs and the rapid repeat of semi-automatic weapons are an everyday occurrence.

As my wife stated in her testimony, in an average year, 1,529 people die by guns in Ohio, and 929 of those deaths are suicides. Gun violence costs an average of \$937 per person each year in our state. Gun violence costs the US over \$280 billion each year. We have way more gun violence and gun suicides than all other wealthy countries combined.

Our country has the highest per-person rate of civilian-owned firearms in the world, and more than twice the rate of the second highest country, Yemen. The idea that somehow the government is going to take away these guns is ludicrous. These false cries that gun ownership is under threat only serve to whip up more sales. A significant number of these sales occur online without basic background checks – 1.2 million in 2018. Ohio is one of the states with the highest number of online sales where no background check was conducted. This loophole makes it very easy for criminals to obtain firearms and it’s very easy for online sales to cross state lines. Federal action is needed to ensure universal background checks. Do we really want Ohio to become the source for the tools used to commit murders and suicides in neighboring states?

I join the majority of Ohioans, and the MAJORITY of gun owners who agree that responsible gun ownership involves safety training and safety practices, background checks, and “red flag” laws that allow families to appeal for help to temporarily remove guns from the hands of those close to them, before they kill others or themselves.

Thank you,

Kevin Weinbrecht