

Opposition testimony for SB 168
Alexandra Hubbard

Dear Sen, Hoagland and Committee Members;

I'm a school psychologist working in K-12 public schools in NE Ohio and I vote regularly. I am writing to strongly oppose SB 168. I urge you to reject this bill in order to ensure the safety of your constituents.

This bill will encourage more school systems to put more guns in our schools. Yet there is no evidence that having more guns around our students will make them safer. There have been documented instances of guns being discharged by school staff on school grounds and guns being misplaced or stolen and ending up in the hands of students. We cannot allow for this risk in our schools.

As a school psychologist, the safety and mental health of public school students is of utmost importance to me. Research shows that increasing the number of mental health professionals in schools such as school psychologists, counselors, and social workers increases school safety. There is no evidence that armed security officers in schools increase school safety. Research also shows that the presence of armed security officers may actually be harmful to students. And relying on veterans to police our schools is a risky proposition. They do not have the proper training about childhood behavior and development to make split second life and death decisions about our children. In this bill, we have no assurances that the amount of training that will be required will be enough to make our children safe from poor decisions. Because of this, I am convinced that we should not put resources towards arming school staff, especially when schools already have limited safety resources for students including mental health professionals.

I urge you to vote no on SB 168.

Thank you for your attention,
Alexandra Hubbard