

Testimony on SB 168
Ohio Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee

Submitted by:
Chris Wolf

Chair Hoagland, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to SB 168 which attempts allow for the establishment of “school safety designees” who would, after receiving some training, be permitted to carry guns in Ohio schools. As a resident of the state of Ohio, I urge you not to pass SB 168 through your committee for the following reasons:

1. The theory upon which this bill is based is false - Over the past 18 months, the Ohio House and Senate have introduced a variety of bills (including SB 168) with the same intended purpose – to allow school staff and administrators to carry guns to school. The sponsors of these various bills assert that their bill, if enacted, would increase safety in our schools as a result of more people carrying guns during the school day. The rash of gun violence our state and country have witnessed over the past 18 months – corresponding with a surge in gun sales – would seem to provide proof that the “more guns equals more safety” theory is, in fact, false.
2. The training required of “school safety designees” will be inadequate - SB 168 seeks to establish a state-wide organization to train “school safety designees” in “basic firearms training” as determine by the state’s Attorney General. While the training requirements are not specified in the bill, my suspicion is that those requirements would fall far short of the requirements (both training and experience related) required of school resource officers. As a result, if enacted, SB 168 would result in unqualified gun owners serving the role of security guard while also attempting to perform their true job as either an educator or administrator. “Basic firearms training” usually consists of some classroom training and some time on the gun range. Let’s be honest, spending a day in a classroom and a few hours on the gun range does not effectively prepare someone to respond appropriately to an armed shooter situation in a school.

3. An option for increasing the number of armed personnel in schools already exists, making SB 168 unnecessary - As you know, many school districts already employ “school resource officers” for the purpose of providing armed security. This is a well -stablished role with appropriate and clearly defined training and experience requirements. To the extent that a school board of an Ohio district wishes to increase the presence of armed security personnel on their school campus, they can decide to hire more school resources officers. This allows the school board to achieve their goal of more guns on campus in a more safe and appropriate way.

For the reasons stated above, I am opposed to SB 168 and I encourage all committee members to stop this bill and not move consideration beyond this committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Wolf