

Veterans and Public Safety Committee

Opposition Testimony on SB 168

Steve McCarren

Chairman Hoagland and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to SB 168.

I am a long time resident of Jackson Township in Stark County and a retired physician. As the father of 2 boys, I am completely against SB 168. My wife is a teacher and she has testified that she cannot think of anything more disruptive to the well-being of the teaching environment than having guns in proximity to teachers and students. Schools are not the place for “martial law”, they should be a safe environment for learning. Both the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association, oppose having guns in schools. All the research tells us that more guns in and around school grounds means there will be more gun violence around our children. Boston University’s School of Community Health Sciences, studied this question and found that “states with higher levels of gun ownership have disproportionately large numbers of deaths from firearm-related homicides.” (LiveSciences). The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has stated that “the safest home for a child is one without a gun”. To me, the logical conclusion then is that the safest school for a child is a school without guns.

If a community does decide to have armed officers in the school, they should have extensive training similar to that of “Peace Officers”. This bill does not tell us how many hours of training would be required by the State Att’y General. We wouldn’t get to know this until after the bill is already passed. In the end, it could end up being an inadequate training. There are too many unknowns for parents in this bill. Therefore, I urge you to vote No on SB 168.

Respectfully,
Steve McCarren, M.D.