

Ohio Senate Veterans & Public Safety Committee

Chairman Sen. Frank Hoagland

Vice Chair Johnson

Minority Chair Thomas

Committee members

June 15, 2021 Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence Testimony opposing SB 185

The Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence-OCAGV- opposes this bill for a number of reasons. First, to call firearm businesses 'essential' in an emergency is insulting to health professionals and the many essential workers that were trying to save our families lives. The survivors of those who lost their lives from Covid know that their loved ones needed more health care not more firearms.

Secondly, years ago the Ohio state legislature decided that local firearm laws could not be enforced. Preemption – 9.68- in Ohio changed the way cities could keep their citizens safe. It took away the freedom that allowed people to govern themselves. Preemption assumed no one could be as informed or as 'wise' as the people that govern at the state. The legislature believed that local law was confusing and that the local government was not capable of understanding how to regulate firearms. They said for gun owners to understand their legal responsibilities all firearm laws had to be the same throughout the state. The state said they would pass the needed regulations in Ohio. It didn't happen. The only thing we have seen is the weakening of any reasonable restrictions.

Now, SB185 claims to know what is life sustaining during an emergency, ties the hands of local government by not allowing them to respond, protects all gun related activities and suspends rules on concealed carry. While protecting guns and their owners SB185 gives a special privilege to "any person, group, or entity adversely affected by any manner of law enacted or enforced in violation of the bill may file an action for damages, injunctive relief, declaratory relief, or other appropriate redress."

This encourages anyone that does not want to be restricted in any way to look for a way to file damages if they don't have complete freedom to decide the law on their firearms. SB 185 then goes on to punish political subdivisions if they try to prohibit the sale, dispensing, or transportation of firearms into areas that are cordoned off during mob or riot activity.

Very simply SB185 prohibits state and local actions by making all firearm and equipment activities 'essential'.

It might do us well to define 'essential' and 'emergency' especially in the context of our health during expert and professional declared emergencies. How are we to trust state government when they distrust all the experts.

'essential' - absolutely necessary

'emergency' - a situation that poses an immediate risk to health, life, property, or environment

OCAGV asks that you vote no on this bill to respect all Ohioans and experts and not just the gun lobby.

Contact us if we can provide information or answer questions. Thank you.

Toby Hoover, Survivor and OCAGV Founder

Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence [www.ohioceasefire.org](http://www.ohioceasefire.org) [info@ohioceasefire.org](mailto:info@ohioceasefire.org)  
OCAGV is a statewide organization working for the freedom from gun deaths and injuries.