

Opposition Testimony SB215

December 14, 2021

Michelle Heym

- Chairman Hoagland, Vice Chair Johnson and Ranking Member Thomas: Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony today. My name is Michelle Heym, and I am presently an Ohio resident, but was a young mom living in Connecticut during the Sandy Hook Elementary mass shooting of 26 babies and teachers and a Mom in December of 2012. So I know what it's like to be terrified as my children were on lockdown, my niece was in lockdown a few miles away from Newtown, Connecticut when 26 individuals were killed . I wasn't at the school but consider myself a survivor to speak for those that aren't with us, to vehemently oppose SB215 with every ounce of my being.
- This legislation would expand the ability to carry concealed handguns to certain criminals and people charged with crimes who cannot currently obtain a license. Permitless carry will allow Adults over 21 to carry a gun without a license, with no background check, or safety training. It's illogical and not common sense legislation. Senator Hoagland, thank you for your service, would the US Navy allow you to be a Navy Seal, for 30 years in combat zones, fighting terrorism, and the war on drugs without a training certificate that showed you had some sort of special ops training to be a Seal, a background check, and some kind of safety training? I don't think so. I am honored to be speaking to you right now Senator, and it's quite admirable what you and many senators have done for our country, but Chairman Hoagland, what would your Father say if you had no education, no background check, no safety training as a Seal or he had no training as a Green Beret? And I am talking to all senators, it is your duty to protect Ohioans. 215 will not make Ohioans safer

- Permitless Carry Bills are Anti-Public Safety. They seek to repeal important public safety laws that are working in Ohio. Current concealed carry licenses ensure that core public safety standards are preserved when people carry deadly weapons in public places. We need laws that will encourage responsible gun ownership, like safe storage laws and extreme risk protection orders that will reduce gun violence that is increasing in our state. I am speaking to the the veterans and public safety committee. It is your duty to keep Ohioans safe.
- Attorney General Yost praised our current concealed handgun law, saying, “By any measure, Ohio’s concealed carry licensing system has succeeded in combining safeguards that protect the public and provisions that uphold Americans right to bear arms. Safeguards are not instituting Permitless Carry. We are relying on you Senators to confirm policy that will keep Ohioans safe. Not allow Ohio to look like the Wild Wild West, with vigilantes running through the streets or worse, concealing a deadly weapon.
- Neither the US Constitution nor the Ohio Constitution protect conceal carry. The Ohio Supreme Court upheld a state forbidding the carrying of concealed weapons and ruled “there is no constitutional right to bear concealed weapons, in 2003 in the case Klein vs Leis.
- SB 215 is anti-police. First, the bill will allow those who have been convicted of a misdemeanor assault on an officer to carry a concealed weapon. Again, illogical. We should not be widening the net to include this group to carry a concealed weapon. Second, the bill removes the duty of a person carrying a concealed handgun who is stopped by police to promptly notify the police that the individual is carrying a concealed handgun. Handgun is such a funny word, implying that it’s less than it is. A hand gun is a deadly weapon that kills. We should not be putting our

law enforcement in this position. Third, the bill also limits the power of police to stop and question a suspicious individual carrying a gun.

- Multiple law enforcement groups, such as the Fraternal Order of Police in Ohio, Ohio Association of Police Chiefs, Buckeye State Sheriff's Association, The Prosecuting Attorney's Association, Toledo Police Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, as well as many individuals including the Sheriff of Van Wert county, Chief of Orange Village, Hamilton County's Sheriff McGuffey and individual police have spoken very clearly in opposition of permitless carry bills.
- Third, Permitless Carry Bills are Anti-Victim. What I mean by that is that SB215 favors the shooter over the victim. This bill gives the shooter the right, by filing immediately in a criminal proceeding without any evidence and without the victim being a party – a claim to immunity from prosecution that will take the question of guilt or innocence of the defendant/shooter from the jury. Especially at that early state, the prosecution (and victim) will be put at a disadvantage.
- In conclusion, SB 215 is very dangerous for Ohioans, it's anti public safety by gutting the permit and training requirement. Criminal background checks and 8 hours of training will be waived and eliminated if permitless carry is passed into law. SB215 is anti police, in that if one is stopped by law enforcement during a routine stop, an individual carrying must notify that they are carrying. SB 215 would remove these obligations. SB215 is anti victim with its immunity clause favoring the shooter over the victim. Please think very carefully before you decide to vote and please say no to SB215.