

Testimony Opposing Senate Bill 215  
Veterans and Public Safety Committee

Submitted by:  
Robin Hawkins

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 SB215. I am writing to you today as the mother of an Ohio police lieutenant and grandmother of six Ohio children. I have lived in rural Medina Ohio for the last 35 years and support the second amendment. I advocate for responsible gun ownership which should ALWAYS include training and proficiency in safe storage and usage. I oppose this bill because it will make ALL Ohioans less safe and is Anti-Police.

**SB 215 Removes Current Requirement for (at least minimal) Safety and Competence Training by Concealed Carry Permitting Process**

Forgoing the permitting process arms people who have not demonstrated any competence or training who then **1) have a false sense of security**, erroneously believing they can now **protect themselves** anywhere they go and **2) interject themselves** into situations with a firearm which **should be entrusted to trained law enforcement**. In states where similar legislation has passed gun violence and deaths have dramatically increased.

My son and every police officer must demonstrate proficiency with his firearm 4 times/year and they are required to participate successfully in scenario training to protect the public in a variety of "active shooter situations" so that the officers can practice and learn how to best **protect bystanders**. This practice is necessary even for seasoned officers as it presents them with multiple simulated life-threatening encounters and the often negative and unanticipated consequences of action choices **without endangering anyone**. This remote preparation helps them remain calm and to act appropriately in real crises.

Unfortunately the "good guy with a gun" who may show up "ready" to shoot has **not** had any of this training and **now confronts the professional responders with yet another armed individual to assess**. Mistaken for the perpetrator, they are deadly distractions that can and have frequently become targets themselves.

**SB 215 Removes Requirement for a Background Check for Concealed Weapons in Public**

Our current requirement for a background check **prevents felons, domestic abusers and those convicted of misdemeanor assaults on law enforcement** from legally concealing firearms in public. It is **unconscionable** to provide persons who have already demonstrated criminal, violent behavior to hide their loaded firearms. SB215 would make my son's job protecting the public, fellow officers and himself even more dangerous and benefit criminals.

**SB 215 Removes Requirement to Immediately Inform Police of Concealed Hidden Weapon and Police's Grounds to Investigate for presence of loaded firearms**

Laws currently protect officers and the public they serve by requiring that those who go armed in public report the presence of loaded firearms thereby including this awareness in any potentially dangerous situation. Blindfolding officers and weighting the individual's right to carry

loaded firearms with no restrictions makes everyone, especially those charged with public safety, less safe.

### **SB 215 does NOT represent what Ohioans want from our government**

Most believe that a permit should be required for a person to carry a concealed, loaded firearm. Permits require essential background checks, live-fire training and provide law enforcement with **documentation to verify both. It is mind-boggling to erode public safety by dropping these requirements with more first-time gun owners than ever before.**

Current law already provides a process which allows law-abiding Ohioans to carry a concealed weapon in public. Who does destroying this process benefit? Criminals and those who do not wish to be inconvenienced or challenged to consider anyone else's safety.

As elected officials empowered to protect and serve the citizens of Ohio, you have a duty to base your decisions on facts, data and the testimony of experts, especially law enforcement experts including The Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio, Ohio Association of Police Chiefs, Buckeye State Sheriff's Association, The Prosecuting Attorney's Association, and Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, who oppose Permitless Carry. I hope you can rise to the occasion and defeat this bill.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Robin Hawkins