

Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee
Opposition Testimony on SB 215
Sammie Dannug

To the Chairman and Committee Members, thank you for allowing me to testify on this important legislation. My name is Sammie Dannug and I am a teacher at Jackson Middle School in Massillon, Oh. I firmly oppose SB 215 because doing away with permits for concealed carry will eliminate the requirement for background checks and training for people carrying guns where we cannot see them.

In 2018, I experienced an attempted school shooting that ended with the shooter taking his own life in the school bathroom. My classroom was just 2 doors down from that bathroom. I hid with my students in the classroom for 4 hours until the all clear. A worse tragedy was averted because another student saw the gun and ran to tell a teacher. This is a quiet suburban community, with excellent schools, surrounded by rural areas and I never expected that I would face gun violence at work or in my community.

For years, the NRA has been telling us that "the only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun." This is clearly not true. In 2018 the Small Arms Survey reported that Americans already owned 46% of the world's civilian owned guns and that number has undoubtedly risen over the past 2 years. Yet we have by far the highest gun death rate of any developed nation and our gun deaths just keep going up. In Ohio, our gun death rate increased 34% from 2010 to 2019 compared to a 17% increase nationwide. So more guns is not making us safer. However, I agree that we need to do more to keep guns out of the hands of "bad guys" (violent criminals, illegal drug users, or domestic abusers). Since background checks were introduced in the 1990's, they have prevented 3.5 million gun sales to prohibited purchasers. Ohio's background checks are not perfect...they would work better if they included the hundreds of thousands of online sales between strangers. But they are certainly better than no check at all! Please rejects 215.

Sincerely,

Sammie Dannug