

Opposition testimony SB 215
Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee
Submitted by: Sandra Fiehrer
December 14, 2021

Chairman Hoagland, Vice Chair Thomas and members of the Veterans and Public Safety Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Sandra Fiehrer. I'm a concerned Ohioan, mother and community volunteer in OH 86. I'm taking time during the holidays to write testimony against another dangerous bill to expand gun access in Ohio. SB 215 would give access to concealed firearms by people, including criminals, who cannot legally access them now. I oppose the reckless public endangerment you seek to allow for the sake of your agenda, lobbyists & gun radicals. I urge you to reject SB 215; legislation allowing guns to be carried without training or registration.

SB 215 is a direct threat to our safety and it creates new lethal risks for Ohioans instead of solving them. I oppose this dangerous bill to expand gun access because it would allow people without safety training and those with dangerous histories to carry loaded handguns on city streets and in crowded public areas. 88% of Americans support obtaining a permit before carrying a concealed handgun in public and 90% of Ohioans support the current permit law. Once again you are not legislating for the majority of Ohio.

I have spoken with our Rep, a veteran, several times about this. Service members who boldly serve our country undergo thorough background checks, specific training and are required to follow strict protocol for the use of their weapons. WHY would you think it's in any way reasonable to allow ALL Ohioans to carry concealed firearms with no vetting, training and protocol? The very nature of concealed carry puts everyone, including law enforcement, at risk every day, because of hidden firearms. Removing the registration and training requirements for gun ownership is irresponsible and further escalates peril for my family and every Ohioan. Why would you want to allow violent criminals or drug offenders to carry concealed who aren't permitted currently? When everyone is allowed to carry hidden guns, there is no way a first responder can tell the difference between responsible gun owners and assailants in an emergency. In June in Arvada, Colorado good samaritan Johnny Hurley fatally shot a gunman who had just killed a police officer and was then shot and killed by police who mistook him for the assailant. Ohio law enforcement will be significantly and tragically impacted when everyone they encounter-including individuals with a violent history-is legally allowed to carry concealed & loaded without training or a permit. Don't claim you "back the blue" while you directly increase their risk!

States that have enacted permitless carry have seen a substantial increase in firearm violence. In Alaska, the first state to enact permitless carry, the Department of Public Safety saw a 65% increase in aggravated assaults with a gun after passing the law. Arizona saw an 8 percent rise in aggravated gun violence as well. The Ohio Constitution & The United States Constitution do not grant the right to have "guns everywhere". When will you stop drafting radical performative legislation to appease gun extremists and start solving Ohio's gun violence problem? You work for us not ALEC or The Heritage Foundation. This is not "pro-life". Your constituents demanded you "Do Something" after the mass shooting in Dayton in 2019 and you've done nothing but continue to pass legislation to make guns more accessible since that day!

You're on the wrong side of this issue if you pass SB 215.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.