

Veterans and Public Safety Committee
Opposition Testimony on SB 215-Permitless Carry

Submitted by: Seth Wannemacher

Dear Chairman Hoagland, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Thomas and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify on this important issue.

I am an Ohio resident and voter. My fiance is a kindergarten teacher working in a public school in Northeast Ohio. I strongly oppose SB 215 and similar versions of Permitless Carry.

This bill would eliminate all requirement for permits, background checks, and any training for people to carry concealed guns in our communities. It would make it easier for convicted criminals, domestic abusers, drug dealers and those with a court adjudicated mental illness to carry concealed weapons.

I do not carry a concealed gun. When in public, I usually would move away from that person with a gun if I can see the gun. That's one way I protect myself and my family. But I can't move away, if I cannot see the gun. That's why need extra restrictions on concealed carry like Permits, background checks and training. If you pass this bill, you are taking away **my right** to defend myself. That is unfair and unconstitutional!

SB 215, as written, would also change current law so that if someone is stopped, they will not have to notify the Officer that they are carrying a concealed weapon unless the officer first asks them. So the onus will be on the officer. The Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Buckeye State Sheriffs Association and Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association have all testified against similar laws in the past. In fact, SB 215 would prevent police from even *asking* about suspicious looking guns that are visible. The Police Patrolman's Association testified last year on a similar bill (SB 178) "...a person could have a car load of AK-47's and the officer would not be able to question them." Our legislature should be supporting our police, not making their job harder.

Even if you tweak this bill with a few ammendments, it just just a bad bill for Ohio! Ohio's gun death rate is growing at twice the national average. Close to 1,500 Ohioans die from gun violence every year. A recent study by Boston University found that states without permits and background checks had 15% higher gun homicide rates than states with such provisions. Reliable polling shows that 88% of Ohioans (including gun owners) want background checks and minimum training standards for those who carry concealed guns. Please Reject SB 215.

Respectfully,

Seth Wannemacher