

Opposition Testimony SB215

December 14, 2021

Tony D'Ambrosio

Chairman Hoagland, Vice Chair Johnson and Ranking Member Thomas: Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony today.

My name is Tony D'Ambrosio and I am writing as a concerned citizen in opposition to SB215. This legislation would expand the ability to carry concealed handguns to certain criminals and people charged with crimes who cannot currently obtain such a license. We need laws that will encourage responsible gun ownership. Widening the net of who can carry concealed weapons, when gun violence is increasing in our state, is not a way to diminish gun violence and keep our communities safe.

Concealed carry requires a background check and training because it has the potential to be far more dangerous to the public. Concealed carry is given specific licensure to maintain a level of safety - in who can own a gun and how they are permitted to carry it. Both the Ohio Constitution and the United States Constitution do not guarantee this right. Gun rights activists need to stop manipulating the second amendment to further their "guns everywhere" agenda. More importantly, lawmakers need to stop acquiescing to them at the expense of the lives of Ohioans.

Concealed carry permitting systems enjoy overwhelming support nationally—88 percent of Americans think you should get a permit before carrying a concealed handgun in public.¹ Over 80 percent of gun owners, non-gun owners, Republicans, Democrats, and Independents agree that high safety standards are critical in issuing concealed carry permits.² Law enforcement experts, firearm trainers, and military personnel overwhelmingly agree that people who carry concealed weapons in public should take firearm training, including live-fire training.³ Concealed carry permitting systems ensure that only responsible gun owners can carry concealed handguns in public. Permitless carry bills remove these safeguards and allow carry by irresponsible and dangerous people, such as violent criminals, weapons offenders and people who pose a safety risk. Requiring applicants to pass a criminal background check, complete safety training, complete live fire shooting exercises and be a resident of the state are not too onerous given the possible lethal outcomes when owning a firearm.

SB215 would permit Ohioans without any training in the use of guns to carry a concealed handgun. Handguns require more skill to use properly than a car and are at least as lethal. According to The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (June 3, 2020), there were 38,680 fatalities from car crashes. Roughly 35,000 people are killed by guns every year. Yet prior to obtaining a driver's license, Ohio law includes classroom time, on the road practice with an instructor, 50 hours of on the road experience with a licensed citizen as well as a written test and driving exam, over a minimum of six months. I've not heard of any legislation changing the requirement of obtaining a driver's license to zero hours and no exams. And that's for the sake of safety on the road. Legislation regarding

concealed carry and who may obtain a license should be about safety. Not about rushing to put guns in the hands of more citizens and criminals.

In Ohio, we need laws that will keep people safe. Changing the restrictions on who can obtain a CCW and then allowing anyone to carry is not the way. I ask you to please oppose SB215.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony with you.

1. Kevin Ingham, “New Survey Finds Strong Opposition to Concealed Carry without a Permit” (memorandum, Strategies 360, March 2015), <https://every.tw/2tSNDyq>
2. Daniel W. Webster et al., “Concealed Carry of Firearms: Fact vs. Fiction” (Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Center for Gun Policy and Research, November 16, 2017), <https://bit.ly/2QJr2Mi>.
3. Joseph J. Vince Jr., Timothy Wolfe, and Layton Field, “Firearms Training and Self-Defense: Does the Quality and Frequency of Training Determine the Realistic Use of Firearms by Citizens for Self-Defense? Facts and Evidence for Public Policy Considerations” (Mount St. Mary’s University and the National Gun Victims Action Council, 2015).