

Testimony on House Bill 99

House Criminal Justice Committee

March 24, 2021

Chair LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to House Bill 99. My name is Carolina Bouffieux and I live in the city of Dayton. As a middle school teacher, the issue of school safety is very important to me. To my mind, there is no justification for HB 99. I disagree with arming school personnel to begin with, but to allow them to carry guns with so little training is unconscionable.

Federal management agencies in fields as varied as public health, law enforcement, education, and emergency care, all oppose letting teachers carry guns in schools. Over the past couple of years, I'm sure you have read about incidents of accidental shootings, or guns going off, or turning up missing in school settings that allow teachers to be armed. How do these events remotely support the idea that guns in schools are a good idea?

As a teacher, I find no comfort at all in the notion that my colleagues could be carrying a weapon. We are not trained to make literal life and death snap decisions under duress. Even trained police officers suffer after discharging their weapons, and that is part of their actual training. Our buildings are supposed to be places of learning and nurturing, havens in an often unsettling and frightening world. We do not need guns in our spaces.

Enacting this reckless bill does nothing to protect students or school staff. It merely pushes forward the agenda of the gun lobby, a lobby that is being exposed as highly corrupt. HB 99 does not meet the standard that should be the priority of the government of this state: the safety of every person in Ohio. I am counting on you to reject this dangerous bill, HB 99.

Respectfully submitted,

CS Bouffieux

