

**Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee**  
**Opponent Testimony on House Bill 99**  
**Melissa Brobeck**  
**May 30, 2022**

Chair Hoagland, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide this written testimony in opposition to HB 99.

As the parent of a fourth and an eighth grader, I am deeply concerned about HB 99 and stand in strong opposition. Although the goal of HB 99 is to keep Ohio's children safer, in practice it will achieve the opposite by putting them in further danger. Research has established that guns in classrooms make children less safe. Firearms are now the leading cause of death for America's children and teens. Access to a gun increases the risk of suicide by three times and homicide by two times. The best way to increase our children's safety is by lowering their exposure to guns. If we want to keep our students and children safe, we must follow the research by passing criminal background checks on all gun sales, passing red flag laws and safe storage laws, adding physical security upgrades, developing emergency planning among staff, and providing access to school mental health professionals.<sup>1</sup>

We must do everything we can to keep Ohio's school children safe, and wholly reducing the current training requirement for armed teachers, school staff, and volunteers runs antithetical to that aim. The Ohio Supreme Court has ruled that an armed teacher must have at least 20 years' experience as an active-duty peace officer or have completed Ohio Peace Officer Training. HB 99 would gut that training requirement to a mere 22 hours. However, there is no amount of training that makes it safe for teachers to carry guns in schools. Should HB 99 pass, more accidental shootings and more misplaced guns are a certainty. This piece of legislation may contribute to loss of life of the children you are hoping to protect. For the safety of my children and all children, please reject HB 99 and focus instead on legislation that would prevent school shootings before they occur.

Yours respectfully,

Melissa Brobeck  
Athens, Ohio

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<sup>1</sup><https://everytownresearch.org/reports/keeping-our-schools-safe-a-plan-to-stop-mass-shootings-and-end-all-gun-violence-in-american-schools/>