

Testimony on House Bill 99
Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee

Submitted by:
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Chair Hoagland, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to HB 99. And I am in strong opposition HB 99! More guns everywhere make us less safe. Classrooms are no place for guns.

Don't you get it? Every home in this country has been harmed by gun violence whether it is because our children must practice hiding in their classrooms, or because someone we know has been wounded by gunshot or if it is because a loved one has died.

It will be three years ago this August since the El Paso and Dayton mass shootings occurred. Since then there have been many more atrocities. Two years ago in Elyria a family of 5 died in a mass shooting. Last year it was a family of 4 in Avon Lake. We in this country and state are in a constant mode of mourning. We grieve these loved ones whose potential will never be reached, whose future families will never exist, whose inventions and discoveries will never be made, whose crops won't be sown, whose verse will not be written, whose music won't be composed, whose art won't make the canvas, and we will all be less for it. With every one of these deaths we lose. We lose. More than last week's loss of beautiful children and teachers and the sorrow we feel for their families which is terribly, terribly great, we feel a loss of security, a loss of freedom, a loss of living without doubt, a loss of living without fear. We can't go into a grocery store, a movie theater, a school, a place of worship without checking where the exits are in case there is a gun nut with an AR 15. We can't put our children to bed without worrying they will be shot in their sleep by a drive by shooting. It is past time to quit worshipping guns. At some point, you must face reality and come to terms with what an affliction guns have on our lives and our communities.

HB 99 allows and encourages schools to arm teachers and staff. Do you honestly think if 19 highly trained officers in Texas were too scared to face an eighteen-year old with a weapon of war, that an Ohio teacher who has had 22 hours of training will be able win a conflict with a weapon of war? Where is your thinking? What we need to do is pass bills that make us safer. Bills like background checks on every gun sale, safe storage laws, and extreme risk protection orders. Not arming teachers to combat assault weapons. If you think or want a teacher, who you don't even trust to teach history or literature, can stop a shooter you are living in la la land. As my 93 year old father would say, you need to have your head examined.

Vote NO on HB 99.