

May 29, 2022

Chairman Hoagland, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Veterans and Public Safety Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to written testimony in opposition to House Bill 99. My name is Leah Knapp. I am resident of Chagrin Falls (Geauga), the mother of an elementary-school-aged daughter, and a 20+ year marketing professional, having worked for a variety of large companies both in other states and here in Ohio.

My husband and I choose to continue calling Ohio home because we believe it provides the right balance of employment opportunities, education for our daughter, and exposure to cultural and social experiences.

I use the word balance because is important for my family and me.

Lack of balance is one reason **I am so strongly opposed to House Bill 99**. As our country and our state continue to deal with armed extremists and entitled, angry young men who believe rules don't apply to them, this bill continues to tip the balance of power. Rather than dealing with root causes of gun violence, we've increasingly asked young children and their teachers to shoulder the burden by *accommodating* it in the form of lockdown drills, arming security, bulletproof backpacks and more.

HB99 ignores the risks and consequences of bringing more guns onto school grounds. The numbers don't lie. More guns in more places results in more gun violence. There have been numerous incidents of guns being discharged by staff on school grounds as well as being misplaced or stolen and later found by students.

If we've learned nothing in the last week, it's that the stomach-turning NRA talking point of good guys with guns stopping bad guys with guns, simply isn't true. Not only did police fail to stop an angry young man with a destructive weapon from *entering* a school, they failed to end his rampage while he murdered 21 children and adults at will. Why our state legislature believes the same group of people they don't trust to pick out library books for second graders is better equipped to do the job of law enforcement boggles the mind.

If we truly care about lives of the everyday citizens here in Ohio as well as the children and educators in this state – surely you know at least one from each category – you will vote **no** on this dangerous, unnecessary and unbalanced bill, rather than continue to give outsized power to extremists who need no further encouragement.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

Sincerely,
Leah Knapp
Chagrin Falls, Ohio