

Testimony on House Bill 99

Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee

Submitted by: Mary Anne Crampton

Chair Hoagland, Sen. Johnson, Sen Thomas, Sen. Fedor, Sen Hackett, Sen Peterson and Sen. Wilson - Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to House Bill 99. My family includes two young granddaughters, a niece who is vice principal at a suburban middle school and two school-age nephews also in suburban schools. These relationships and my familiarity with the “2019 Secret Service Report on Protecting America’s Schools” inform my decision to write to you today.

Why do we keep thinking that more guns and less training in school building will make anyone safer? I implore you to read the Secret Service Report. There is no evidence that arming teachers makes our schools safer. Teachers need to focus on teaching and supporting their students' mental health. Adding firearms to the school day with significantly insufficient training is only going to add stress and danger in the classroom to both teachers and students.

This bill, HB99, would dismantle existing regulations designed to ensure the safety of students and staff in Ohio schools. House Bill 99 guts the training Ohio law currently requires and would allow teachers to carry loaded handguns in schools with as little as 22 hours of training. *Even proponents of HB99 told The House this is not enough training!*

Arming civilians is simply not an effective way to stop an active shooter. Law enforcement officers receive an average of 840 hours of basic training, including 168 hours of training on weapons, self-defense, and the use of force. Even some of the most highly trained law enforcement in the country, the New York City Police Department, see their ability to shoot accurately decrease significantly when engaged in gunfights with perpetrators.¹ How would a teacher with as little as 22 hours of training fare, especially knowing that they themselves would be police targets in an active shooter scenario?

With absolutely no evidence that arming teachers will make Ohio schools safer, I can only conclude that the sponsors of this bill are working with the interests of the gun lobby in mind - not the safety of families who elected you to office.

Surely you are aware that there have been numerous incidents where guns carried into schools were misplaced — guns left in bathrooms, locker rooms and sporting events. There was even an incident where a gun fell out while a teacher did a backflip. There are also multiple incidents where guns were stolen from teachers by students, and cases where guns were misplaced and later found in the hands of students.² With this

¹ Rostker BD, Hanser LM, Hix WM, et al. Evaluation of the New York City Police Department firearm training and firearm-discharge review process. Rand Corporation. <https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG717.html>. Published 2008.

² <https://everytownresearch.org/report/arming-teachers-introduces-new-risks-into-schools/>

knowledge how could it possibly be considered a good idea to have guns in schools on a daily basis?

There are plenty of evidence-based ways to make schools safer!³ Arming teachers is not one. Please do not advance a bill that will make schools LESS SAFE!

If the safety of students, faculty and staff in Ohio schools is truly your intent, HB 99 must be opposed. Please do not move forward on House Bill 99.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mary Anne Crampton

³ <https://everytownresearch.org/report/a-plan-for-preventing-mass-shootings-and-ending-all-gun-violence-in-american-schools/>