

Testimony on House Bill 99
Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee
May 29, 2022

Submitted by: Meghann Naveau

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.

My name is Meghann Naveau, and I am a lifelong Ohioan, business owner and parent.

This is the third time I have prepared opponent testimony for HB 99, and frankly, I'm heartbroken to do this AGAIN less than a week after 19 children and two teachers were murdered in their classrooms.

Teachers and law enforcement oppose allowing guns in schools. The American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association, the nation's two largest teachers' organizations, oppose arming teachers.¹ "An armed teacher cannot, in a moment of extreme duress and confusion, be expected to transform into a specially trained law enforcement officer. **An armed teacher is much more likely to shoot a student bystander or be shot by responding law enforcement than to be an effective solution to an active shooter in a school.**"²

The National Association of School Resource Officers strongly opposes proposals to arm teachers due to the risk it would pose to law enforcement, students and the school community, as well as the risks to the armed teachers themselves.³

I have personally spoken with officers from the Centerville police department about this issue, and they expressed concern about armed people in schools making their jobs harder in the event of a school shooting. They worry about the greater risks and loss of life because officers would likely be unable to quickly identify and subdue an active shooter when multiple people are armed and firing upon police arrival. And, even some of the most

¹ Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, American Federation of Teachers, and National Education Association, "Keeping Our Schools Safe: A Plan for Preventing Mass Shootings and Ending All Gun Violence in American Schools," February 2020, <https://www.everytownresearch.org/school-safety-plan>

² https://everytownresearch.org/report/arming-teachers-introduces-new-risks-into-schools/?_gl=1*c2xfmn*_ga*odq4mtixotkylje2ntm2odq3mdu.*_ga_ltOfwv3ek3*mtylmzc1otqxnc40ljaumty1mzc1otqxos4w&emci=15da7070-b0de-ec11-b656-281878b85110&emdi=09ba8f35-d3de-ec11-b656-281878b85110&ceid=940301

³ NASRO, "NASRO Opposes Arming Teachers," February 22, 2018. Available here: <https://bit.ly/3cVbBxE>

highly trained law enforcement officers in the country, those of the New York City Police Department, see their ability to shoot accurately decrease significantly when engaged in gunfights with perpetrators.⁴

If you are truly trying to make schools safer for our children, this is not the answer. Rather than listen to the extreme gun lobby, that has a financial motivation to pass this bill, please look at what data tells us: criminal background checks, red flag laws, safe storage laws, additional physical security upgrades, emergency plans among staff and access to school mental health professionals are the ways to increase safety in schools. (Resources here: <https://everytownresearch.org/reports/keeping-our-schools-safe-a-plan-to-stop-mass-shootings-and-end-all-gun-violence-in-american-schools/>)

Student safety is critical. Mass shootings in schools are a terrible reality that parents and children should never have to worry about. Yet here we are, less than a week after a mass murder at a Texas school, with the Ohio House attempting to push a bill forward that is NOT the answer to improving safety.

Please help me and every Ohio parent, teacher, and school faculty member to continue to do everything in our power to protect our children. Oppose HB 99.

Sincerely,
Meghann Naveau

⁴ Bernard D. Rostker et al., "Evaluation of the New York City Police Department Firearm Training and Firearm-Discharge Review Process" (RAND Corporation, 2008), <https://bit.ly/2U9bkOt>.