

Testimony on House Bill 99
Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee

Submitted by:
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Chariman Hoagland, Vice Chair Ramsey, Ranking Member Thomas and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to HB99. I write to you as a concerned citizen and a mom of three school-aged children.

As I was driving my 10 year old daughter to school the other day, she told me she didn't think the plan shared during the previous day's lock down drill was a good one. We then proceeded to have a conversation about what would be a better plan. I should not have to have this heartbreaking conversation with a 10 year old, but unfortunately there has never been a time in her life that she did not participate in lock down drills, so we talk about it. Her older siblings began drills at a young enough age that they don't recall a time when these drills weren't part of a typical school year.

These drills serve to create anxiety and fears in our youth. Adding armed teachers will only serve to increase these concerns, while there is no proof that they will actually increase safety.

I send my kids to school to learn, thrive, and become responsible members of society; not to cower and hide because our legislators refuse to enact laws that will help protect them. Universal background checks, safe storage requirements, and red flag laws could prevent individuals showing warning signs from accessing a gun and carrying them into our schools. HB99 puts more guns in our schools rather than keeping them out.

Having more guns in our schools possessed by under-trained individuals only serves to increase the likelihood of misuse. More guns, if not properly maintained and stored can be accessed by individuals intending to do harm. In the hands of untrained individuals, they can also be a part of unintentional shootings.

Before allowing teachers who are not sufficiently trained to handle weapons, please think about the level of trust (or lack thereof) that we place in our teachers. Teachers attend years of school to be fully trained to teach and we still impose restrictions on them in the form of standardized tests and core curriculum. If we feel they need oversight for the very task for which they are trained, why would we want them to perform dangerous tasks for which they are not sufficiently trained?

Please let my kids' teachers focus on teaching. It's what they are trained to do. For the safety of students and their teachers, do not allow untrained individuals to carry weapons in our schools. Because I value the safety and well being of my school communities, and my children, I adamantly oppose HB99.