

Testimony on Sub. House Bill 99
Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee

Submitted by:
Suzanne McLeod

Chair Hoagland, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the committee:

Thank you for allowing me to present this written testimony in opposition to HB 99.

I am:

- A longtime resident of the State of Ohio and a regular voter
- A mom of 3 boys who all attended and graduated from public schools in Ohio. I was a regular volunteer in my children's classrooms in their early elementary school days.
- A grandmother of 4 boys, two of whom are currently attending public school in Ohio. One of my grandsons has some learning challenges because of some sensory issues that require some interventions, including assistive devices such as noise-canceling headphones, and a great deal of help from creative, caring, knowledgeable classroom teachers and intervention specialists
- A widow for 21 years, who raised my 3 sons essentially alone and worked a full-time job as Administrative Assistant in a nephrology group in the OhioHealth system and a part-time job as Director of Music at a local Presbyterian church
- A former member and president of the Grandview Heights City School District Board of Education. I was elected for 3 terms and was elected by my BOE peers to serve as President of the BOE for 9 of those years.
- A former owner of a successful small business
- A graduate of Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee, with a BA in Political Science with secondary certification
- Employed full time as Associate Director of Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies (REMS) in Regulatory Affairs with a generic pharmaceutical company

I tell you all that, both to introduce myself and to confirm to you that I am excellent at multitasking. And also, to tell you that I cannot imagine managing a classroom of 20-30 elementary school students in the horrifyingly more frequent active shooter situations in America and, at the same time, safely unlocking, loading, and confronting an active shooter, especially with only 2 hours of ill-defined "handgun training".

I also cannot imagine ANY classroom teacher managing a classroom full of students at any grade level in an active shooter event with only 2 hours of training. And what if there is a substitute teacher in that classroom who has never been through a lockdown drill?

A few questions for the Committee:

- Has the Ohio Peace Officer association been consulted for guidance on HB 99, particularly on the number of hours and the type of training that would be required?
- How many Ohio educators has the committee interviewed about their thoughts on HB 99?

- Has the Committee consider defining the “training” that would be required, including how the training would be implemented and whether certification would be required?
 - How frequently would retraining be required?
 - Is there a minimum number of hours of hands-on safety training?
 - How will handguns be safely stored in a classroom?
 - What happens if a child gets their hands on the classroom gun?
- How does HB 99 define “teacher”?
- How useful is a handgun against an assault-style weapon, which we know is the weapon of choice in school shootings?
- Does HB 99 provide for mental health care and follow-up for an educator who confronts an active shooter? How about for the students who witness a trusted educator confront and possibly kill an intruder?
- Why is this hearing NOT on the Committee’s schedule? It’s almost like the Committee doesn’t want Ohio citizens to know that this hearing is happening and that the Committee doesn’t want to hear from stakeholders.
- What testimony do you need to convince you to vote NO on HB 99?