

Testimony on House Bill 99
Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee

Submitted by:
Sarah Zimmerman

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.

I am very concerned about HB 99 and am in strong opposition. While I am not a teacher, I am a mother of two young children. I understand that the goal of HB99 is to keep Ohio's children safer, but in fact, it will do the opposite. While I am not a teacher, here are my concerns:

It would make teachers a target, create potential for in-school gun accidents, arm an angry employee, be unhelpful in the face of an actual active shooter event, and create confusion by having an armed citizen walk the schools during a lockdown.

If this passes and the gun is locked and stored properly, what is the likelihood that someone would be in a position to grab the gun and be helpful during a lockdown and active shooter event? If the staff or teacher did grab the gun, what is to say they are not mistaken for the active shooter and killed? What is the likelihood of potential misfire and the teacher killing an innocent student? It would cause confusion. Or what if they are the active shooter- school staff turned angry employee who has access to a gun at his/her job?

If there are multiple guns on school property, then that increases the possibility of an accident. What if a student can gain access to the gun? Students are clever. Many find ways to access the school during locked hours to play pranks. Many find their way to get a "master key". And if someone wants to, a student will find ways to access the gun and using the school's own gun during a shooting.

Last week, even those with multiple assault weapons and body armor refused to stop the active shooter- yes, the Uvalde police force. What makes arming teachers and staff a better solution? The police were there with body armor. There were guns on the scene. There was a security guard at the school. It did not help.

The solution to this problem is not to put the burden on the teachers. This proposal has many dangerous and unintended consequences. For the safety of all of Ohio's school children, please reject HB 99 and focus instead on legislation that would prevent school shootings before they occur.

Respectfully,

Sarah Zimmerman, Powell Ohio