Testimony on Senate Bill 317
Government Oversight and Reform Committee

Submitted by:
Deborah Hogshead

Chair Coley, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to SB 317.

My name is Deborah Hogshead. I'm an Ohio resident, and I live in Troy. I'm a former educator, and my parents were health professionals—one a physician, the other a nurse.

Training is critical for teachers and for health professionals. Without sufficient training, credentialing and licensure, the public is likely to suffer in one way or another.

This brings me to SB317 and the proposal to lower training requirements for teachers to carry loaded firearms in school.

First of all, I oppose the very idea of teachers carrying firearms in our schools. The presence of guns will only introduce new risks. Guns can be discharged by accident. They can also be misplaced or stolen and wind up in the hands of students.

But if our legislators believe teachers should be armed, then I vehemently oppose any effort to reduce training requirements. Basic peace officer training includes 728 hours of instruction. Under current state law, armed school employees must have completed a basic peace officer training course or have 20 years of experience as an active duty peace officer. But SB317 would exempt teachers from this requirement and would allow school districts to hire armed personnel with nothing more than 8 hours of concealed carry training. Without sufficient training, the health and safety of our students —including two of my grandchildren— will be at even greater risk. SB317 doesn't make sense.

You need to listen to the voting public—not the gun lobby. You should put the health and safety of students over gun manufacturers and others likely to profit from the sale of more guns. Your attention should focus on understanding the causes of gun violence and include a review of research into best practices for gun-violence prevention.

I urge the committee to vote against SB317.

Deborah Hogshead