

Testimony on Ohio House Bill 99
Criminal Justice Committee
November 4, 2021

Submitted by:
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Chair LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the committee, thank you for considering my written testimony in opposition to HB 99. I am a retired Ohio physician who worked for many years in one of our major trauma hospitals where I saw far too much horrible damage from firearm violence, usually among young people. And that was among survivors (the dead ones aren't hospitalized.)

Allowing and encouraging teachers to carry arms in school is dangerous and mistaken. I understand the concern people have about increasing firearm violence in our society. The mistake is thinking that more firearms will decrease those injuries. President Reagan liked the saying "trust but verify". You should use that idea when you consider what some people tell you about the value of teachers and others carrying firearms. It seems you and others think that will decrease injuries, but the EVIDENCE shows that it will increase injuries and is dangerous.

Contrary to our emotional responses, the EVIDENCE shows that more guns are associated with more gun violence.

I urge you to OPPOSE any legislation that would allow teachers and others to carry loaded guns in schools. Such bills should NOT go forward. They are dangerous. Teachers oppose them, insurance companies oppose them (you realize, I am sure, that they are, above all, experts on risk assessment!). Federal law enforcement opposes them. And much more training is required to use a gun effectively and safely than that minimal level allowed by currently proposed bills in Ohio. We wouldn't let anyone serve as a teacher or nurse or doctor or paramedic with so little training.

THERE ARE BETTER WAYS TO MAKE SCHOOLS SAFER, such as Extreme Risk laws, secure gun storage laws, and evidence-based threat assessment programs (see <https://tinyurl.com/ETSchoolSafety>). I appreciate your desire to have safer schools – please use these more sensible and evidence-based approaches to guide your future efforts, and Vote NO on HB 99.

Please consider the EVIDENCE on how to decrease firearm injuries and OPPOSE this dangerous bill.

Thank you.

References:

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