

**Testimony on House Bill 227**  
Government Oversight Committee  
Submitted by:  
Mimi Karon

Chairman Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing my testimony in opposition to HB 227. My name is Mimi Karon, and I am a concerned citizen and mother. I am disappointed that bills like HB 227 continue to appear on the agenda in our state house when poll after poll show that Ohioans want sensible gun legislation that includes background checks. In light of the 100 people shot to death daily in our country and the families whose lives will forever be ruined because of their loss, HB 227 must be buried once and for all.

While preparing testimony, I did considerable research. And the one constant in each article was the need for substantial weapons training. In his article "If You Choose to Carry a Gun For Self-Defense, Proper Training is Essential," Kyle E. Lamb, who spent more than 21 years with the United States Army, mostly in Special Operations, wrote, "If your only firearms education is what the state requires before it issues a carry permit, I can tell you beyond the shadow of a doubt you don't have enough training." He also said, "If you choose to exercise your God-given right to defend yourself and your family by carrying a weapon, you must take the time to learn the laws in your area and consistently train to maximize your ability to effectively respond to any threats that may materialize." Please listen to what experts say about this legislation, including law enforcement who oppose it because it presents greater danger for them.

A key to findings in a report conducted by Mount St. Mary's University and the National Gun Victims Action Council stated, "If you're going to rely on a gun for self-defense, you should know how to handle and use it." It continued, "safe and effective firearms usage requires mental preparation; legal knowledge; judgmental awareness; as well as firearm expertise, skill, and familiarity." According to Sergeant Jason Halifax, a Des Moines police spokesman and law enforcement firearms trainer, "Shooting a target on a range is one thing. You can put all your shots on a dot when you control the situation and can decide when to fire." "But," he added, "when your adrenaline is pumping and your heart is beating faster, you're not going to shoot the same way you do at that range – not without a lot of training." And according to Concealed Carry University, an online information resource for private citizens who choose to carry concealed handguns, "93% of single-gunshot wounds are survivable, which goes against the common expectation that one bullet is enough to stop a threat." In addition, CCU found that "participants with no skills were not only slow to fire but did not fire enough shots to effectively neutralize the threat they faced." By cutting the training for gun ownership, HB227 puts novices in vulnerable positions that did not exist prior to gun ownership. It gives them a false sense of security when now they are more vulnerable.

Please implement legislation that will keep Ohioans safer. Time Magazine reported on mass shootings, just after our own Dayton shooting, in August of 2019. The article states "Experts on violent crime say such incidents make clear that despite the NRA's post-Sandy Hook justification, relaxing gun laws to let more people to arm themselves has done nothing to prevent mass shootings." The article quoted John Donohue, a Stanford Law professor whose research has focused on gun violence and policy, "It's likely to make things worse if armed civilians intervene when shootings erupt in public places." He went on, "Unless you're very well-trained, you usually add more to the body count than you subtract." Finally, according to Joe Hendry, director of risk assessment at the ALICE Training Institute, which focuses on

response strategies to shootings “only about one in five rounds fired by officers responding to shootings hit their targets.” It seems incredibly negligent to implement a law that exempts people from much needed training, increasing their chances of being in harm’s way, particularly when they believe, in their own minds that they are actually safer. It puts new carriers unknowingly in an extreme danger. Not to mention innocent bystanders.

HB227 clearly makes one’s ability to protect themselves and family nearly impossible by removing the minimum training requirement, which, according to all sources, still isn’t even enough. Ohio’s legislators need design bills around data that is proven effective in keeping citizens safer while also upholding the Second Amendment. This bill appeases a small group of people in our state who know the importance of these safety requirements but, sadly, are ignoring the risk to others.

### **Sources**

Mansoor, Sanya. “Research: Untrained Gun Users Prove Ineffective at Self Defense.” The Christian Science Monitor. The Christian Science Monitor, July 28, 2015. <https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/USA-Update/2015/0728/Research-Untrained-gun-users-prove-ineffective-at-self-defense>.

Gajanan, Mahita, and Sanya Mansoor. “Dayton and El Paso: 'Good Guys With Guns' Can Rarely Stop Mass Shootings.” Time. Time, August 7, 2019. <https://time.com/5644578/good-guys-with-guns-el-paso-dayton/>.