

Testimony on House Bill 51
Government Oversight Committee
March 13, 2023
Submitted by:
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Chair Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Forhan, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to House Bill 51. I am a resident of Cincinnati, a voter and a mom.

Common sense should prevail at the Ohio State House. Sadly, today is not that day.

HB51 is yet another absurdity that will greatly affect our local and state law enforcement departments.

Do each of the committee members back our local police officers and sheriffs deputies? If you vote in favor of HB51, you are most certainly doing the opposite.

Domestic incidents are the most dangerous situations which law enforcement encounters.¹

When firearms are added to the equation our officers' risk also increases. Domestic abusers are prohibited from permitless carry in Ohio by virtue of current Ohio law which adopts the federal gun disability list {18 USC sec. 922(g)}. HB51 will arm domestic abusers and those with restraining orders.

Death by firearm is the number one cause of death for our men and women in blue, this bill entices those already guilty of violence to now be legally armed.² This bill would create a tragic equation:

HB51: Anger + violence + guns = tragedy

Recruiting numbers for new law enforcement officers are down across all segments of agencies.³ However, this law bars the state from hiring qualified, former federal law enforcement officers who in the past had enforced federal gun regulations. HB51 creates

¹ Domestic Violence Calls Proven to Be Most Dangerous for Law Enforcement Officers
<https://www.khou.com/article/news/local/domestic-violence-calls-proven-to-be-most-dangerous-for-responding-law-enforcement-officers/285-c7fef991-320d-4d4d-9449-2ede67c10829>

² National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. Causes of Law Enforcement Deaths.
<https://nleomf.org/memorial/facts-figures/officer-fatality-data/causes-of-law-enforcement-deaths/>

³ International Association of Chiefs of Police. "A Crisis for Law Enforcement."
https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/239416_IACP_RecruitmentBR_HR_0.pdf

another barrier to hiring qualified candidates in Ohio. Do representatives believe in hiring the best person for the job to create safer communities? It appears there is a vendetta against the federal government which is clouding your judgment. If going tit-for-tat with the federal government is more important than our officers' safety, then you are playing in horrific political theater.

Support your words. Back our law enforcement officers by voting **no** on HB51.