

Committee Chair Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Forhan and Committee Members:

My name is Theresa Tracy, and I am a concerned mother and grandmother. I am asking you to please oppose HB51, which is particularly dangerous for women. As a retired teacher and school principal I can attest to the many times violence against women has also impacted children in devastating ways. When guns are placed in the hands of the perpetrators of that violence the damage escalates exponentially. HB51 will allow an abuser convicted of domestic violence or under a domestic violence restraining order to be deemed a qualifying adult (ORC sec. 2923.111(A)(2)(B) who can carry a concealed firearm without a permit. My daughter was once in the position of needing and getting a restraining order. In her case, the abuser continued to threaten her and when the police arrested him, he was in possession of a gun. I shudder to think what could have happened both to my daughter and also to the arresting officers. This bill puts our law enforcement in greater danger since domestic violence calls are often the most dangerous for police. With gun ownership and gun violence increasing in our state, I'm angry that the sponsors of this bill feel that protecting women and law enforcement is not a priority and that this bill is necessary to protect 2nd Amendment rights. I simply cannot imagine that the framers of the United States Constitution ever intended or could have foreseen the 2nd Amendment being used to permit abusers access to guns.

As Justice Scalia said, in the Heller case "Like most rights, the right secured by the Second Amendment right is not unlimited.... [It is] not a right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever and for whatever purpose." While 2022 statistics are not available, 2021 witnessed 1,762 gun deaths in Ohio according to data from the Ohio Department of Health. I ask that you protect Ohioans, especially women and law enforcement by opposing HB51.

Thank you for your time and consideration.