

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

My name is Ethan Nichols, and I am the Founder and Executive Director of Ohio Students for Gun Legislation, an organization founded by and for Ohio young people who are committed to ending gun violence.

I am here to ask you to please oppose HB 51, which is particularly dangerous for women. According to Everytown's research, 70 women are shot and killed by an intimate partner each month. Nearly 1 million report they have been shot or shot at by an intimate partner. 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. This bill also 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 is not a priority, as this bill demonstrates.

This bill sends a message that gun laws don't apply to Ohio and that people can get away with gun-related crimes. This legislation actively undermines the rule of law.

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 Ohio Department of Health data.

Please. Take action. You have the power to help end gun violence in Ohio. HB 51 is dangerous, and it will make Ohioans less safe.

Yours,

Ethan Nichols