

To the Chair, Vice Chair, Ranking member, and all other members of the committee, I thank you for your time today.

“The question is do you want local control or not local control? I don’t think the state needs to be micromanaging everything every school district does. Every school district is different. We elect school boards for a reason. Those boards should be making decisions about what they think is best...the question is not whether or not this is an acceptable option. The question is do you want your school board to make the decision, or do you want people down in Columbus?”

That’s not my opinion on the issue before us today. That’s the opinion of Representative Beth Lear, the sponsor of House Bill 183, on the topic of teachers being able to carry guns in schools, from a candidate forum in April of 2022. How quickly her opinion on local control and micromanagement from “people down in Columbus” changed after she was elected to be one of those “people down in Columbus” last November.

To the representatives that support this bill, I know there is nothing I can say to change your minds. There is no scientific data to back up your positions. There is no rationale for this bill that stands up to even the smallest amount of scrutiny. You can’t change the mind of someone who isn’t using it.

To any representatives that may be unsure if you support the bill or not, I encourage you to talk to the actual people it would impact. Talk to trans kids and trans adults. See how they feel. Look at data. Look at how much other states have had to spend in legal fees to defend bills like this, just to lose. Use your minds. Or just hop in a time machine and talk to the sponsor Beth Lear in April of 2022. She thought micromanaging school districts at the state level was a bad idea then, and I agree with her that it’s still a bad idea now.