

LWV Ohio Statehouse Day – March 31, 2015
An Appropriate Response to Guns in Schools
By Rosie Craig

A little known loop hole in Ohio's Concealed Handgun Legislation is that school boards can identify select individuals to be allowed to enter schools and school safety zones with their concealed weapons. Originally there for the rare case of someone like a CIA agent with a child at that school, this loophole is now being exploited by pro-gun advocates to arm school staff as a supposed way to make our schools safer. The law provides **THAT THIS CAN BE DONE WITHOUT APPROVAL OR CONSENT OF THE PUBLIC THAT THESE SCHOOLS SERVE!**

In respond to the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary school, Buckeye Firearms boasts that it was the first organization in the country to provide armed teacher training. The three day training program called FASTER was first developed in 2013 and is currently being offered free of charge to school staff who apply and who are accepted. It also offers free consultation to school board members on such use-of-deadly-force programs.

LWVO members can have a most important impact by contacting their school boards to insist that CCW license holding staff NOT be allowed to carry guns in schools, regardless of training, with out an opportunity for the public to weigh in on the issue.

While we might have less objection to *resource officers* who are active police officers carrying their guns in schools, we have school boards in Ohio who are allowing CCW designated individuals to carry in the schools, with out having full disclosure and participation of the community as to whether this is something people want for their children's schools.

The public needs to remain focused on preventing people from buying or possessing guns who should not have them. We need to continue our work to change our culture of acceptance of gun violence in our communities. Schools remain one of the safest places for a child to be.

Dangerous distractions would certainly occur should teachers and staff try to mind the presence of a loaded gun, concealed or otherwise, while carrying out their school duties.

Meanwhile, Gun legislative efforts at the 131 Ohio General Assembly are pretty much the same as they have been for past years. A number of confusing and dangerous bills that encourage the proliferation of guns have been introduced by pro-gun legislators. In the past, advocates to reduce gun violence have been successful at stalling such bills and/or reducing their negative effects on public safety.

Bills that the LWVO can support under our national positions such as background checks for gun purchases, or child access prevention and accountability bills have been introduced, but face considerable opposition.

Gun Bills - Ohio 131st General Assembly 2015-2016

Find bills here <http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/>

Bills to reduce gun violence

[HB 16](#) Rep. Reece, Cosponsors: Reps. Antonio, Ashford, Boyce, Boyd, Celebrezze, Craig, Fedor, Howse, Kuhns, Lepore-Hagan, Sheehy, Strahorn, Sykes; To regulate the commercial sale, modification, and public display of imitation firearms and the disguising of a firearm as an imitation firearm. **Introduced.**

[HB 75](#) Rep. Patmon, Cosponsors: Reps. Boyd, Lepore-Hagan; To prohibit any person from storing or leaving a firearm in the person's residence unless the firearm is secured in safe storage or rendered inoperable by a tamper-resistant lock or other safety device if the person knows or reasonably should know that a minor is able to gain access to the firearm and to provide criminal penalties if a minor gains unauthorized access to a firearm not so stored or rendered inoperable. **State Government Committee.**

[HB 78](#) Rep. Patmon, Cosponsors: Reps. Curtin, Lepore-Hagan; To prohibit any transfer of a firearm from a person who is not a federally licensed firearms dealer to a person who is not a federally licensed firearms dealer unless the firearm is transferred through a federally licensed firearms dealer, through a state or local law enforcement agency, or pursuant to a specified exception; to require that background checks be conducted when a firearm is transferred through a federally licensed firearms dealer or through a state or local law enforcement agency; and to provide for recordkeeping with respect to information obtained pursuant to such a background check. **State Government Committee.**

[HB 79](#) Rep. Patmon, Cosponsor: Rep. Schaffer; To require an applicant for a hunting license to specify whether the applicant has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a felony and to require the license to specify "firearm restricted" if an applicant has so indicated. **State Government Committee.**

Bill to increase punishment

[HB 59](#) Rep. Cera; Cosponsors: Reps. Rogers, Lepore-Hagan; Increase mandatory prison term for felony committed with firearm. **House Judiciary Committee**

Bills that will make it easier for gun access, use, secrecy and to prohibit enforcement

HB 20 Reps. Gonzales, Koehler; Cosponsors: Reps. Bishoff, Dever, Hambley, Kraus, Retherford, Rezabek, Young; To expand and clarify the authority of a concealed handgun licensee to possess a handgun in a school safety zone. **Introduced.**

HB 35 *Reps Retherford, Hood Cosponsors: Reps Brenner, Zeltwanger, Thompson, Vitale, Becker, Maag, Kraus, Buchy, Johnson, T.;* To prohibit any agency and its employees and agents from seizing or authorizing the seizure of any firearm from any person lawfully in possession or control of the firearm except when a law enforcement officer reasonably believes the immediate seizure of the firearm is necessary for the safety of the officer or another person or to preserve the firearm as evidence, to prohibit the establishment of a firearm registry, and to prohibit law enforcement officers and international agents from enforcing a firearms registration requirement or firearm ban. **Introduced.**

HB 48 *Rep Maag; Cosponsors: Reps Hood, Retherford, Vitale, Brinkman, Becker, Buchy, LaTourette, Hayes, Thompson, Kraus;* To extend to handguns affirmative defenses to a charge of carrying a concealed weapon or having or transporting a firearm in a motor vehicle, and to modify the prohibition against carrying a concealed handgun onto institutions of higher education, places of worship, day-care facilities, aircraft, certain government facilities, public areas of airport terminals and police stations, and school safety zones. **Introduced.**