

Testimony in Opposition to SB116 – Concealed Carry without a Permit

Mr. Chairman and Committee members, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about this bill. My name is Annette Moore, and I live in Evergreen in Jefferson County. I am a lawyer, wife, and mother. I am here today testifying as a Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense volunteer and to express my strong opposition to this bill, which would authorize the carrying of concealed weapons without a permit. As a mother of two young children, I am deeply concerned about the level of gun violence in our state. I believe requiring permits in order to lawfully carry a concealed weapon provides numerous practical benefits that help reduce gun violence while imposing minimum burdens on responsible gun owners.

In my view, people carrying hidden, loaded handguns in public creates unnecessary risks of intentional or accidental shootings. Carrying concealed weapons increases the risk that everyday disagreements will escalate into shootouts. I continue to read about everyday encounters that turn deadly because concealed weapons were involved.

I believe that requiring a permit in order to carry a concealed weapon provides a measure of protection against unnecessary gun violence. It ensures that people who carry concealed weapons get appropriate training that could save their lives and as well as the lives of others and ensures that local enforcement properly vets those seeking to possess concealed guns. It also provides other benefits, for example, in allowing law enforcement to quickly ascertain that a person who possesses a concealed weapon has undergone an appropriate background check. This is just common sense.

Permitless carry would dismantle our state's concealed carry permit system and allow people to carry concealed, loaded handguns in public without a permit or safety training. This would not make me feel any safer, for my family or for our community. Permitless carry lowers the bar for who may carry hidden handguns in public, abandoning core public safety standards. That's just not good for public safety, and even responsible gun owners can agree that's not the kind of community we want to live in.

For these reasons, I oppose this bill. Again, thank you for the opportunity to address you today on this very important public safety issue.