

Hello Chairman Filler, and committee members, thank you for allowing me to speak to you today. My name is Emily Durbin and I am a resident of East Lansing, Michigan. I am submitting this testimony as a member of Moms Demand Action to ask that you carefully consider the ramifications of, and to oppose HB 5479.

I am deeply concerned about the adverse impacts this bill will have on the ability of local governments to act to protect public safety. City governments have intimate knowledge of what their local communities need. Each city has its own set of issues and solutions: for example, what Flint needs is not always what Lansing needs, and vice versa. This bill would further restrict the ability of local governments to make their own public safety policies - policies that directly impact the lives of their constituents. Local governments are uniquely positioned to protect the public safety of their communities by enacting local ordinances and resolutions. I believe this bill threatens the power of local governments to make decisions that directly address the needs of their local communities.

I understand that the sponsors of this bill have their communities' best interest at heart, and I do too. But I also believe in my local government officials to act within their authority to implement policies that would protect the public safety of their communities. I implore you to look at and work instead to pass meaningful, proven measures to reduce risk in Michigan; passing a bill to keep guns out of the hands of convicted domestic abusers, implementing policies designed to save lives and reduce the high rates of firearm suicides among our rural populations, and ensuring that every person who wishes to buy a gun undergoes a background check making sure they are legally allowed to own a firearm. Gun violence prevention and gun ownership are not at odds with each other, I believe we can work together to ensure our laws help reduce and prevent gun violence, not increase it. I urge the committee to vote NO on HB 5479.