

Melissa Sweet

From: Wittenborn, Andrea <andreaw@msu.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, March 1, 2023 2:58 PM
To: Melissa Sweet; OfcSCC@senate.michigan.gov
Subject: Testimony for Hearings on Background Checks, Secure Storage, and Extreme Risk Protection Orders Legislation

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Dear Committee Clerks:

Please place the following testimony on file for the hearing tomorrow on the following bills: Universal Background Checks, Secure Storage, and Extreme Risk Protection Orders Legislation

Dear Judiciary Committee,

I am a professor and mental health professional at Michigan State University. I have seen the profound damage of gun violence on people's lives over and over again. I was on the faculty at Virginia Tech for the seven years following the shooting that left 32 people dead and more than a dozen wounded. I collaborate with Oxford High School and witnessed the devastation when four students were murdered and six students and a teacher were injured. Last month, three students were killed and five others were injured at Michigan State University in the building where I teach and in the Student Union. The week prior to that, my 12 year old son hid in silence in a dark storage closet for 45 minutes listening to sirens fearing for his life during the Okemos school district swatting incident.

In my work as a mental health professional, I have also seen how unlocked guns have devastated families and access to firearms for those who are suicidal or are perpetrators of intimate partner violence ended in tragedy. The traumatic impact of gun violence ripples out to many people beyond identified victims.

The laws under consideration have been proven to prevent these tragedies and trauma. Please have the courage to act and pass these bills now.

Sincerely,

Andrea Wittenborn, Ph.D.
Professor, Michigan State University