

HB1337 Testimony Against

Representative Jay Elkin,

I oppose this bill, as it allows more loaded guns onto school grounds and also because it makes taxpayers pay for the privilege of “enhanced security” that will likely just cause bigger security concerns.

Arming teachers doesn’t make a bit of sense, as it allows more access to firearms in our schools. It increases the risk of unattended loaded firearms are left around campus, which could be accessed by children or people who do not have training to use them safely. More access to firearms strongly correlates with risks for more gun violence, accidental or otherwise. Studies consistently show also that access to a firearm triples the risk of death by suicide and doubles the risk of death by homicide.

Arming teachers can also create a culture of fear for students, especially students of color. It can also complicate law enforcement’s response to active shooter situations. It could make it harder to tell the good gun holders from the bad ones.

There are also legal liabilities and insurance liabilities to consider. Policies related to firearms that are unclear or have loopholes could leave teachers and school districts criminally or civilly liable if incidents occur. Even if the policies are well written, with no loopholes, and immunities provided, being sued becomes more likely should an incident involving a gun occur. If nothing else, the monetary liabilities alone should cause concern deep concern. States cannot exempt schools from federal civil rights liability and can be sued in federal court, and they cannot use state immunity provisions to protect themselves from claims.

I have many teachers who are friends and who own guns themselves who have indicated that there is no way they would be OK with bringing a firearm into the school where they work. They are trained to hunt, not to fire under stress. Even highly trained members of the military and the police force can have trouble – why in the world would we think a teacher should be OK with that responsibility?

Allowing more firearms in schools is essentially costly and irresponsible and would cause more problems than it would solve. There are other [evidence-based](#) ways to protect our schools from gun violence. I’d prefer to see funding for those instead.

Thank you!