

Testimony of Anna Allen
Volunteer with Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America
January 23, 2023, 9:00AM

Good afternoon Chairman Carpenter, Committee members, and staff. Thank you for acknowledging my testimony today.

My name is Anna Allen.

I am a writer who returned to my home state of Kansas 15 years ago. I grew up in a home with firearms for quail and pheasant hunting and was taught to respect the potential danger guns pose. My parents took on the onus of safely securing all firearms in our home out of reach for my siblings and me, as well as for any of our neighborhood friends who came to play. The fear of a preventable death caused by a firearm in our home as well as the threat of a school or other public venue shooter who obtained an unsafely stored firearm never entered my mind as a daily danger for which I needed to be alert against and practice defensive maneuvers for. As a current parent to middle and elementary school-aged children, I wish my children and I had the same rights to freedom today.

I am testifying today because HCR 5020 is a dangerous resolution that poses a direct threat to Kansas public safety laws that protect our communities by keeping guns out of the hands of people who we all agree should not have them.

Gun safety is a non-partisan public safety issue for Kansas children. With guns currently the leading cause of death among Kansas teens and children, it is our responsibility and duty to keep dangerous individuals from gaining access to firearms. When I, along with every other parent in the state of Kansas, send my children out the door to school, I tell them I love them and know they may worry about bullying, understanding the math assignment, a disagreement with a friend, a dropped lunch tray, or forgotten homework - these are the things I expect my kids to worry about. However, I know they are also fearful of an active shooter invading their school. They practice several times a year for this scenario because it has become so prevalent. It is unfair and as the adults holding power to take actionable, commonsense steps to protect them from preventable gun violence, we are failing Kansas children.

Please vote **NO** on House Resolution 5020 in order to protect Kansas teens and children from preventable gun violence.

This bill poses several significant concerns:

If adopted, strict scrutiny would threaten to eliminate Kansas's most crucial public safety laws, including:

- **Prohibition on Gun Possession by Convicted Felons:** After strict scrutiny amendments passed in Louisiana and Missouri, convicted felons challenged

state laws that prohibit felons from possessing firearms. At least one lower court found that Louisiana's law prohibiting felons from having guns was unconstitutional. Fortunately, the Louisiana Supreme Court reversed this ruling.

- **Prohibitions on Gun Possession by Domestic Abusers:** In Louisiana, after strict scrutiny passed, a convicted domestic abuser challenged the constitutionality of a state law prohibiting possession of a firearm by people convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence crimes.

Strict scrutiny laws make state taxpayers fund the flow of lawsuits brought by criminal defendants.

- The Missouri State Auditor determined that Louisiana's strict scrutiny law led to "significant time, effort, and expenditures by Louisiana's public defenders and district attorney's offices," imposing "significant workload and related costs on the Louisiana government." The auditor projected that a strict scrutiny law in Missouri **would ultimately cost Missouri taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.**

Again, I encourage members of the committee to vote **NO** on House **Resolution 5020**.

This concludes my testimony and thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify today.