

Testimony of Melissa Reichmeier
Volunteer with Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America
Kansas State House - House Federal and States Affairs Committee Hearing
March 7, 2024, 9:00 AM

Dear Chairman Carpenter, Committee members, and staff. Thank you for hearing my testimony today.

My name is Melissa Reichmeier.

I have lived in Overland Park, KS for 35 years and two of my adult children continue to reside in Johnson County.

I am testifying today because HB 2803 is a dangerous gun bill that seeks to prohibit Kansas law enforcement and law enforcement agencies from assisting in the enforcement of certain federal gun laws.

I retired from a local high school after 20 years, during which time we lost more than one student to suicide, a parent to suicide and a parent who was a victim of domestic violence, all with legally obtained firearms.

My own son battles anxiety and depression and has tried to take his life. He would not be with us today if we had a firearm in the house. State of mind can change so quickly, and having access to firearms has proven to increase the risk of death by suicide, domestic dispute, homicide and unintentional shootings. Common sense gun laws save lives and need to be enforced.

In Kansas, the rate of gun suicide increased 14% and gun homicide increased 102% from 2012 to 2021. Statistics that I find frightening and headed in the wrong direction.

This bill poses several significant concerns:

- HB 2803 would attempt to nullify certain federal gun laws by preventing Kansas state and local law enforcement from assisting in the enforcement of these laws, and penalizing police, prosecutors, and other Kansas government employees who participate in the enforcement of federal public safety laws.
- Rather than prioritize legislation that will make it tougher for law enforcement to do their jobs and actually make Kansas citizens less safe, our lawmakers should focus their time and energy on reducing gun violence. Our leaders should be prioritizing common sense gun safety measures that actually protect communities from gun violence, not policies that would make it difficult for law enforcement officials to keep us safe.

I encourage members of the committee to vote NO on HB 2803.

This concludes my testimony.

Thank you,

Melissa Reichmeier