



Representative John M. Rogers
60th House District

Chairman Hayes, Vice Chairman Brenner, Ranking Member Fedor, colleagues, good morning and thank you for affording me the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony today on HB-192.

My co-author on this legislation, Representative Perales apologizes as he is unable to be here today due to his commitments to Aero-Space Day, an effort he is spearheading throughout Ohio. He has asked that I relay to the committee that he wholeheartedly supports this legislation and asks for yours.

Rep. Perales' background as a civil engineer and his role as the facilities manager at the University of Dayton, provides him with a unique perspective as to what this bill will accomplish. He has spoken with area architectural engineers both on and off area military bases and all believe this is the right time to move forward with this requirement to assist in helping to avoid the all too familiar tragedies that have happened in the past and, sadly, are likely to happen in the future.

Indeed, all of us are aware of the dangerous and often tragic situations that have arisen due to gun violence and shootings in

our schools. In response, there have been a number of proposals here and elsewhere that have been the topic of consideration.

Consider that the 130th General Assembly has discussed the possibility of arming our teachers and/or staff, allowing teachers with concealed carry licenses to bring their side-arms to work, adding more funds to provide school resource officers, and enacted legislation that would allow off-duty and/or retired police officers to patrol our schools along with certain military veterans having specific training, and the list goes on.

Today, we are asking you to consider legislation that is simple. HB 192, if enacted, would take advantage of a critical juncture that is present when a school district designs and constructs any new facility. The Bill simply requires the incorporation of safety features during the building's initial design stage – at a time when adding these safety features is more affordable as opposed to incur expensive remodeling and/or retrofitting costs after the fact.

We recognize that what we propose is not the comprehensive answer to addressing a very serious and ongoing issue, but it is a measure, that if implemented, will help to enhance the overall safety and well-being of our students and staff in some of our schools.

The essence of this legislation requires that newly constructed school buildings shall include at a minimum, two of the following safety features:

- surveillance video, and/or
- entry way metal detectors, and/or
- direct entryways and exit routes located within a classroom, which may only be accessed from inside that classroom, and/or
- two-way communication systems between classroom and administrative offices, and/or
- real-time notification devices accessible in classrooms, such as a “panic button”, to directly alert local law enforcement agencies, and/or
- a means of threat containment, which could include a barrier system to lock down portions of the building wherein a threat has been identified.

The local School Systems would have final discretion over which features to include and would certainly be encouraged to include more if they so choose. I think we would all expect that any current design and construction of any new building housing classrooms would include proactive planning and implementation of safety features. Both Rep. Perales and I believe that these requirements would help to ensure that new buildings are safer.

In closing, we ask that you carefully consider this legislation and we welcome your support.