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OASIS – Ohio Association of Security & Investigative Services
Testimony before Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee
Substitute House Bill 439
Tuesday, March 29, 2018

Good afternoon Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Rezabek, Ranking Member Celebrezze, and members of the Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee. I am a proud retired officer of the US Army, a former Columbus Police Detective, and currently agency owner of Ohio Special Services Group – a private investigations and security services agency here in Ohio. I was appointed by Governor Kasich to the Ohio Private Investigations and Security Services Commission in 2014.

I am here to testify in opposition to Substitute House Bill 439.

I have owned my company since 2005, when I left law enforcement. In my business, I do a lot of the apprehension operations for bail bonding companies who do not have the techniques, tactics and procedures to safety and effectively apprehend individuals who fail to appear. We do this in accordance with Ohio Revised Code 2927.27.

The state of Ohio relies on organizations like mine to carry out fugitive apprehension operations. Sometimes these instances require the use of full tactical equipment due to the dangerous nature of the individuals we are seeking. All of the training and equipment we purchase is a private business expense.

For example, we outfit our team with \$1,600 of body armor each – all borne by our business - not at the expense of taxpayers. We don't get government funding or grants – we fund it all ourselves.

I employ 16 private investigators – and this work constitutes 35% - more than a third – of our business. These are real Ohioans with real jobs who will be impacted by this legislation that is unproven and risky, and doesn't seem to carry any real benefit to Ohio's justice system.

In our work, we are helping to bring closure and justice for victims of crimes. By seeing the perpetrator who has harmed them brought to justice, we feel we are helping them to cope and heal from the crimes that were committed against them.

Without our assistance, the State of Ohio and local municipalities will be forced to try to squeeze their manpower and budgets to find the resources to carry out this important and critical work.

I think this legislation will be a big mistake – and have a negative impact on Ohio's law enforcement, judicial process, economy and most importantly, the innocent victims of crimes in our state.

Thank you for your time, and I'll be happy to answer any questions.