

Madam Chairwoman and Committee Members,

My name is Jeffry Smith, from Cincinnati. I'm here today to testify in favor of HB 201, Constitutional Carry, repeal of notification, and expungement of previous convictions for same. Some background information on me:

- NRA Life Member
- NRA Basic Pistol Instructor since 2004, who has taught hundreds of students
- Gun safety instructor and monitor for multiple "Shooting Sports" weekends for local Boy Scouts
- Participant in the "Defense Walks" of 2003, in support of concealed carry legislation in Ohio
- Participant in numerous efforts to improve Ohio's gun laws, organized by Ohio's gun groups
- Active participant in multiple gun rights forums
- Since 2014, organizer of more than 10 open carry events, under my name, in Ohio, Missouri and Kentucky – each aimed at improving gun laws, or insisting on government compliance with gun laws
- In summary - instructor, activist, and an individual in touch with gun matters and gun law inside and outside of Ohio.

- 1) Constitutional carry: my speculation is that elected officials consider licensed concealed carry to be like a warm fuzzy blanket in the wintertime.

I understand the perspective that a person who has been trained and background-checked is different, or maybe even better than an individual who has not participated in such activities. On the other hand, as an instructor who's received dozens and dozens of phone calls from people about whether or not they could get a concealed carry license, I know that 1) people want to know the law, 2) people want to know where their license would be good, 3) people want to know if some kind of previous illegal activity disallows them from getting a license or carrying a gun, and 4) criminals **couldn't care less** about any of the above.

In states that have passed Constitutional Carry, demand for training AND for licenses has actually gone up!

Far from validating the shopworn claims of the anti-gun side, whose overblown emotional assertions have repeatedly been proven wrong, law-abiding citizens want to remain law-abiding, and in my experience have and will seek out resources to a) remain that way, and b) educate themselves about firearms. The role that government can and should play is to encourage/provide resources and mechanisms for youngsters and adults to do both.

- 2) Notification is an idea whose time has long passed. It's an anachronism, just like the Ohio State Patrol's insistence in 2004 that one's loaded handgun had to be in plain sight while one was in a vehicle. (That portion of the law was removed years ago) Not only has the "promptly notify" portion of current law been repeatedly abused, but officers are and have been trained to approach every individual as if they're armed. Notification is duplicative and unnecessary, and I think that most law-abiding citizens would inform police as a courtesy anyway.

As for expungement of previous convictions for lack of notification, or lack of "prompt" notification, a minor law violation such as 'failure to notify promptly' ought not to sully an otherwise law-abiding citizen's record. Removing such a conviction is the right thing to do.

Thank you for your attention, and if you have any questions for me I'd be glad to answer them.

Sincerely,

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Ohio Citizens Defense League
Campus Carry Coalition

4:00PM, Statehouse room 115, 5/23/17

<http://www.ohiohouse.gov/committee/federalism-and-interstate-relations>