

THE OHIO COUNCIL OF

*Retail Merchants*  
The voice of retail since 1922

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July 5, 2017

The Honorable Kristina Roegner  
State Representative, Ohio House District 37  
77 South High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairwoman Roegner,

The Ohio Council of Retail Merchants stands strongly opposed to House Bill 233. It is our belief this legislation dangerously curtails the rights and protections afforded to private property owners and businesses with regards to prohibiting firearms on their premises.

Under current law, business owners can display signage prohibiting the carrying of firearms on their property. In addition, current law allows for criminal charges to be levied if an individual is found guilty of violating that prohibition<sup>1</sup>. House Bill 233 would essentially allow individuals to carry loaded weapons into a place of business regardless of posted signs prohibiting firearms, with limited criminal repercussions. This directly conflicts with employer protections included in the original concealed carry law. The bill states that violators can only be charged with a fourth-degree misdemeanor if they refuse to leave when asked by the property owner/management or they return within 30 days to the same location. Not only does this leave the property owners with little recourse if they wish to prohibit firearms but additionally puts them in a dangerous position of having to confront violators and watch for their return.

In closing, House Bill 233 would leave business owners with new uncertainties regarding which if any policies they can enforce regarding firearms on their property while also placing a new burden of confrontation if they choose to ask an individual possessing a firearm to vacate the property. Current law has provided Ohio with a balance between the rights of concealed carry holders and the rights of business owners. House Bill 233 would destroy that balance, leaving property owners vulnerable and unprotected. On behalf of over 7,400 Ohio businesses and representing an industry that employs one out of every four Ohioans, we stand strongly opposed to House Bill 233.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,



Alex T. Boehnke

Council Affiliates

 Ohio Association of Wholesaler-Distributors



 Focus  
on Ohio's Future

Manager of Public Affairs

CC: Members of the House Federalism and Interstate Relations Committee

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<sup>i</sup> ORC Ann. 2923.126(C)(3)(a).

Council Affiliates

 Ohio Association of Wholesaler-Distributors



 ORMA  
Ohio Retailer Management Association



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