

NIRAJ J. ANTANI

42ND DISTRICT

Vice Chair- Committee on Higher
Education & Workforce Development

Committee on Health

Committee on Energy &
Natural Resources

Committee on Community &
Family Advancement

Committee on Aging & Long Term Care



Ohio General Assembly
House of Representatives
Columbus

VERN RIFFE CENTER
77 SOUTH HIGH STREET, 11TH
FLOOR
COLUMBUS, OH 43215-6111

—
T: (614) 466-6504
—

F: (614) 719-6966
—

REP42@OHIOHOUSE.GOV

House Bill 425
Sponsor Testimony
Government Accountability & Oversight Committee
January 8, 2018

Chairman Blessing, Vice-Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Clyde, and Members of the Government Accountability and Oversight Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 425, which would establish public record law for body-worn police camera videos.

Body-worn police cameras are a technology that are being used more by our law enforcement officers. Soon, many of our law enforcement departments will be using these cameras. While these cameras are important in providing transparency and accountability to all involved in a police encounter, they also raise important privacy concerns. These cameras will be going into places a police cameras has never gone before, leaving open the question of whether they are a public record or not. It is the Wild West right now with regards to whether a police worn body camera is a public record: some believe it is, some believe it is not.

This bill sets forth the laws that would govern the public record law for body-worn police camera videos. It says that, in general, the video is a public record. The bill then specifies the exceptions in which the video is not a public record. Some of these exceptions include if it is a confidential investigatory record, a video inside a private home or business, a video of a victim of a sex crime, personal healthcare information, and others. These exceptions were carefully crafted to protect the privacy of our citizens. This bill also acknowledges the transparency on both sides of the cameras these videos provide by stating that in general the videos are a public record.

Body worn police cameras are very controversial. This bill does not require its use, nor does it ban it. This bill does not require it to be on at certain times, nor does it regulate when it should be off. This bill is setting forth public record law, a creature of the state, so that accountability and transparency can be preserved, while also protecting the privacy that is so sacred in our nation for our citizens. This bill has been the culmination of a year and a half of work and the input of nearly thirty organizations. In the as introduced version, before you today, I know of no known opponents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 425. I would be happy to take any questions.