

Ohio Legislature

Reference HB 585

I am a retired master sergeant (E-7) of the Air Force Reserve and a former member of the 910th Security Forces squadron. I am also a deputy sheriff and have been in law enforcement for over 20 years. I see where even in these capacities there would be a problem with this bill. A neighbor who doesn't like or agree with my career choice could bring it to an abrupt end. The mere idea of a "possible threat" through a simple conversation could be misinterpreted. What if any provision is provided to guard against this type of attack?

I am submitting this letter in regards to HB 585. As a coach/mentor for our high school Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP), I have had the opportunity to work with some very fine students. As a student 30 plus years ago, I had the opportunity to participate in this same program. In the course of the 70 year history of the program at Howland High School, we have not had a serious injury. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for the other sports within the school.

In the course of the CMP shooting sports, the students are instructed on proper handling of firearms, with an emphasis on safety. Self-discipline, team work, self-confidence and being able to focus are also skills learned. This program allows for students that may not have the physical or athletic ability to participate

in another team. This is also a gender neutral event where boys and girls compete at the same time

Participation in this program has allowed some students that are reserved or shy the opportunity to open up and be a part of something.

This bill could potentially block or prevent some of the reserved or shy students from wanting to participate. In a time and age where we don't want to alienate someone, at this level it is already being done. Not only would the student be alienated by their peers but now by the very school that is supposed to protect them from such behavior.

The "Red Flagging" of an individual on the mere issue of a minor disagreement would be a huge economic burden on law enforcement in many communities. Where budgets are already stretched very thin, this will create hardships and animosity towards law enforcement.

A final thought, this year's winter Olympics had a focus on the Biathlon event. For those that don't know or perhaps haven't heard of this event, it is cross country skiing paired with shooting. The participant skis a specified distance and then has to shoot at 5 targets from a specified distance and position. Not an easy task with an increased heart rate. The focus and self-discipline required is amazing. That Olympian from Ohio could potentially now be subject to this same legislation.

I hope that some points here are a bit of food for thought to the impact of this bill. In the larger picture NO gun legislation has done much to stop the criminal. Lawful gun owners have taken hit after hit for the actions of those wishing to not obey the law.

Respectfully,

Mark W. Japuncha