

Sponsor Testimony—H.B. 142

Chair Coley, Vice Chair Uecker, Ranking Member Schiavoni—thank you for inviting me here today to offer sponsor testimony on House Bill 142.

This piece of legislation arose from the need to clarify language found in Ohio Revised Code Section 2923.126, which currently states that a concealed handgun license holder “shall *promptly* inform any law enforcement officer who approaches the vehicle while stopped that the licensee has been issued a concealed handgun license.” The ambiguity surrounding the word “promptly” has led to incidents in which tensions are unnecessarily escalated during routine traffic stops, when an officer determines that they have not been notified promptly enough. I myself have experienced just that kind of situation, and I believe HB 142, should it become law, will ensure that these incidents are avoided in the future by specifying exactly when a concealed handgun licensee must notify the officer on hand; that is, immediately upon receiving a request for identification from the officer.

HB 142 would also reduce the penalty for failure to notify, as we determined that a 1st degree misdemeanor, the current penalty, was a disproportionate response to a situation that often arises from simple misunderstandings on the part of one or both parties, or even plain old forgetfulness. I want to point out that the original version of HB 142 eliminated the duty to notify and the associated penalties entirely. The version before you today reflects a long, deliberative process undertaken by House Federalism Committee members, as well as responses to the concerns raised about the original language by members of the law enforcement community who came to testify.

Overall, I am confident in HB 142’s ability to improve public safety here in Ohio, and I thank you again for giving me time to speak on its behalf. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have at this time.

Glenn W. Holmes
State Representative, District 63