

Committees:

- Finance
- Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education – Chair
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Commissions/Special Committees:

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- Ohio Aerospace and Aviation Technology Committee
- Ohio Third Frontier Commission Advisory Board
- Ohio Latino Affairs Commission

State Representative Rick Perales
 Ohio's 73rd House District: Western Portion of Greene County

House Bill 94 – Sponsor Testimony
Senate Judiciary Committee
September 12, 2017

Chair Bacon, Vice Chair Dolan and Ranking Member Thomas, thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding House Bill 94, which will recognize February as “Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month” in Ohio. Dating violence is a brand of abuse that is often overlooked in our culture, and teen dating violence is even more of a blind spot. Sometimes even the parents of the abused can be ignorant to its occurrence. I would like to commend my friend and joint sponsor Representative Emilia Sykes for her leadership and courage on this issue.

The harsh reality is that teen dating violence is so common that among high school students who dated, 21% of females and 10% of males experience some form of partner violence, and among adult victims of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner, 22% of women and 15% of men first experienced some form of partner violence between the ages of 11 and 17 years old. That is 1 out of every 5 women, and this is unacceptable. As Rep. Sykes has just mentioned, dating violence can be physical, emotional, or sexual in nature, and the vast majority of these cases go unreported. All forms of dating violence can negatively effect long-term health

outcomes of the victims since many victims face depression, anxiety, and can exhibit anti-social behavior, all of which are corollaries with substance abuse.

As with any large scale issue like teen dating violence, it is important to first identify that there is a problem and that it is negatively impacting life for thousands of Ohioans. Through awareness and education, we can help those victims seek to seek help, and we can mold more positive dating norms amongst this vulnerable population. Thank you to my joint sponsor Rep. Emilia Sykes for her hard work and dedication on this issue, and thank you Chair Bacon, Vice Chair Dolan and Ranking Member Thomas for allowing me to testify today. We will be happy to answer any questions at this time.