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Sponsor Testimony- House Bill 37
Criminal Justice Committee
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Chairman Lang, Vice-Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the Criminal Justice Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 37, which would seek to increase penalties for vicious dog attacks on children and adults.

Under HB 37, if a dog kills or causes serious injury to a person, it will result in a fifth degree felony. If the dog kills a person, a court shall order the dog to be humanely put down. If a dog causes injury other than serious injury to a person, or injury, serious injury, or death to another dog and has previously done so in the past, this will also result in a fifth degree felony. In the case that a dog for the first time causes injury other than serious injury to a person, or causes injury, serious injury, or death to another dog, it will result in a first degree misdemeanor and a court may order that the dog be humanely put down. This bill also increases the arrest authority of dog wardens, and would require 42 hours of initial training, and ten hours of continuing education.

Too many children and adults have been mauled or killed by vicious dogs. In 2018, Savannah Coleman, an 8 year old child, was attacked viciously by a dog. Savannah only survived because a good Samaritan in passing was able to forcibly remove the dog off of her. Savannah spent several days in the hospital due to life threatening injuries. Thankfully, Savannah has been able to recuperate from the attack, however not everyone who experiences this has been so fortunate. Maurice Brown and Klonda Richey of Dayton tragically passed away after being fatally mauled by vicious dogs. We need to put legislation in place that will increase penalties to prevent this from happening in the future.

Most dogs are good pets and playful companions. However, there are a number of dogs that are dangerous and should not interact with the public. Dog attacks can cause severe damage, and in some cases, can result in death. We must pass legislation to help prevent these tragic attacks from occurring and to provide increased penalties when these attacks do occur.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 37. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.