

Jim Sizemore's Testimony

May 1, 2019

Chairman Becker, Vice Chairman Stoltzfus, Ranking Member Miller and members of the House Federalism Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify on this wonderful legislation, House Bill 178.

I am a lifelong resident of Ohio, and have served in the Ohio Army National Guard for 30 years. I currently live in Pickaway county with my wife and three sons.

As a law abiding citizen I believe it is important to reduce the legal restrictions on gun ownership and usage. Criminals do not stop carrying concealed weapons (knives, guns, etc.) because it is against the law. Ultimately these laws only impact those who want to be in compliance with the legal system. As a result the law abiding citizen is put more at risk from criminal elements. And the average Ohioan is violating a law if he carries a gun to protect himself and his family.

Although it is legal to open carry it is not advisable. If I walk around most places with a gun on my hip it would cause alarm to many. If I leave it laying out in the open on my car seat while driving or parked I'm asking for theft. A criminal will conceal a weapon regardless of the law because their intent is deception and violence. A law abiding citizen's intent is protection and not to raise undo alarm.

The Constitutional Carry bill is important because a person could unknowingly violate the current conceal carry law. If I leave my house and accidentally cover a weapon with a coat, I'm now in violation and at risk for prosecution. If I put a loaded gun in my car to transport to the range, or because I'm traveling to an area that is not that safe. I'm in violation of the law. These events can become major legal issues that could place an otherwise law-abiding productive member of the community in serious legal jeopardy.

Ultimately these gun laws do nothing to help keep me or any other average Ohioan safe from gun violence. Instead they put me more at risk of gun violence because they prevent me from carrying the means to protect myself. Most of my life I lived in rural communities. In these areas law enforcement is not a quick phone call away. Half the time cell phones don't have service and if you do contact the law it will be 30 minutes or more before they get there. Not having the means to protect one's self at hand could place one at a complete disadvantage to criminals. And with the increase in drug addiction theft is on the rise.

As a military member I took an oath to defend the Constitution against all enemies foreign and domestic. I believe the second amendment is our last ability to maintain a free government and protect our private property. Gun advocates are censored frequently by every major social media or tech company (google, ebay, Facebook, etc.) and when gun advocates are mentioned in the press they are often maligned and portrayed as lawless right-wing nuts. Frequently the legal system and any legal

loophole is used to take away freedoms, and make litigation so costly the average person can't afford to be free. It is paramount to our freedoms that we ensure the right to bear arms.

If you truly do hear the voice of the people and not only special interests groups backed by rich totalitarian leftist. I encourage you to vote in favor of Constitutional Carry. I don't fear the occasional deranged person who kills people. If I'm not limited by laws I can protect myself. In the last century nearly a 100 million people were killed around the world by totalitarian governments. I fear the government far more than I fear one deranged person, and I want to keep the means to protect myself and my family. As the next election cycle begins its spin I hear more and more about "common sense" gun control and even confiscation. When I say I fear the government I truly fear the path we are heading.

Thank you for this time to present.

James Sizemore