

PROPONENT TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE FEDERALISM
COMMITTEE
House Bill 178

Chairman Becker, Vice Chair Stoltzfus, Ranking Minority Member Miller and members of the House Federalism Committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to present proponent testimony for House Bill 178. My name is Gary Witt, Legislative Coordinator for Ohioans for Concealed Carry, a statewide grassroots political activist organization dedicated to preserving, protecting and expanding the rights of all Ohio gun owners.

We want to remind the committee that in 2003 and 2004 the legislature heard testimony on House Bill 12, License to Carry Concealed Handguns. That bill went on to become law despite the doom and gloom prophecies and the claims of blood in the streets if it passed. You will, in all probability, hear the doom and gloom again. It didn't happen then and it hasn't happened in the states that have passed constitutional carry.

The amendment to this bill resolves a number of issues that originally arose regarding people who are eligible and not eligible to carry a concealed deadly weapon. The bill simply states that if you are prohibited from owning, possessing or carrying a firearm under any state or federal law then you do not have the authority or the right to carry.

The committee has received much testimony on removing the duty to notify when armed and approached by one or multiple officers. I won't belabor the point except to ask, once again, how does notification make the officer safer? We have asked many times and have not received an answer.

Thirteen states currently have constitutional carry, ranging in time from the beginning of our nation (Vermont) to enactment in 2017. I have not been able to find any negative reports on this law, possibly because there aren't any.

As legally armed citizens we take responsibility for our safety. We carry for the protection of ourselves and our loved ones. Bad things do happen to good people. With that said I want to take a few moments to talk about common sense gun laws. This bill would allow the expungement of records of people who have been unfortunate enough to have run afoul of the

notification law. Why would we not do this? Continuing to punish someone by leaving them with an arrest record for something that is no longer a crime is not common sense.

We ask the committee to vote this bill to the full House floor. Thank you for your time, I will attempt to answer any questions that you may have.