

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

My name is Jeffry Smith, from Cincinnati. I'm here today to testify in favor of HB 178, Constitutional Carry. Some background information on me:

- NRA Life Member, NRA Basic Pistol Instructor since 2004, who has taught hundreds of students
- Gun safety instructor and monitor for multiple "Shooting Sports" weekends for local Boy Scouts
- Participant in the "Defense Walks" of 2003, in support of concealed carry legislation in Ohio
- Participant in numerous efforts to improve Ohio's gun laws, both personally & organized by Ohio's gun groups
- Active participant in multiple gun rights forums
- Since 2014, organizer of more than 20 open carry events, under my name, in Ohio, Missouri and Kentucky – each aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, improving gun laws, or insisting on government compliance with gun (and other) laws
- In summary - instructor, civil rights activist, and an individual in touch with gun matters and gun law inside and outside of Ohio.

My speculation is that elected officials consider licensed concealed carry to be like a warm fuzzy blanket in the wintertime.

I recognize the perspective that a person who has been trained and background-checked is different, or maybe even better than an individual who has not participated in such activities. On the other hand, as an instructor who's received dozens and dozens of phone calls from people about firearm instruction and whether or not they could get a concealed carry license, I know that:

- 1) People want instruction regarding the purchase and safe use of firearms
- 2) People want to know carry laws, both concealed and open
- 3) People want to understand use of force laws
- 4) People want to know where a license would be good, and where one is not required
- 5) People want to know if some kind of previous illegal activity disallows them from getting a license, purchasing a gun, or carrying a gun,

**AND**

- 6) Criminals couldn't care less about any of the above.

In states that have passed Constitutional Carry, demand for training AND for licenses has actually gone up!

Far from validating the shopworn claims of the anti-gun side, whose overblown emotional assertions have repeatedly been proven wrong, law-abiding citizens want to remain law-abiding, and in my experience have and will seek out resources to a) remain that way, and b) educate themselves about firearms and firearm laws.

The role that government can and should play is to encourage and provide resources and mechanisms for young people and adults to do both.

Thank you for your attention, and if you have any questions for me I'd be glad to answer them.

Sincerely,

Jeffry Smith  
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Ohio Citizens Defense League, Campus Carry Coalition

10:00AM, Statehouse room 121, 5/8/19, Federalism Committee