

John Vogel's Testimony

May 29, 2019

Federalism Committee

Ohio House of Representatives

RE: Opponent Testimony, HB 178

To: Chairman and Committee Members

My name is John Vogel, Treasurer and Life Member of Western Reserve Fish and Game Association in Niles, Ohio. Our club has an active roster of 176 dues paying members and over 60 life members. In February, our club marked its 100th anniversary. Please note that, for the purpose of this correspondence I speak only for myself.

I also am a member of a committed team of volunteers that teach a monthly CHL class. We have developed our own curriculum and tests based on our comprehensive study of multiple well established programs along with extensive life experiences. Our classroom instructors are all NRA certified and the range is always under the supervision of certified Range Safety Officers. Over the past three years, we have passed about 400 qualified adult candidates, most of whom did get their CHLs. Remember what I said in the first sentence of this paragraph. We are volunteers. While we charge our students a fee to cover ammunition, lunch, use of guns and maintenance of equipment, we do what we do out of a sense of responsibility and respect for the legacy we enjoy as avid firearms sports men and women.

"Responsibility"; an important component to any freedom guaranteed by the US and Ohio constitutions. For example, for those of us who exercise our right to vote, we learn about candidates and issues before casting ballots. We study the electoral process each cycle and make intelligent decisions. We respect prudent restraints on our right to exercise free speech daily. We make decisions about our right to live where we want based on economic realities and family commitments. Yet, in each of these instances, we do not get in a self debate on Constitutionalism because our realities are grounded in responsibilities and self comfort. Why shouldn't that same mind set hold true for "Constitutional Carry" versus a need for licensing and training for a Concealed Handgun License. Ohio has established itself as a favorable example of reasonable training, tolerable fees with a long record of positive statistics under the current legislation on this freedom. Why fix what isn't broken because of

pressure from a purist political concept that is fixated on the exercising of a right without accepting the responsibility to be trained to a level of accepted competency with licensing as the most practical means of ensuring that those who legally carry concealed are educated.

In objection to some of the testimony I have seen by the purist constitutionalists, there is little reason to believe that the general public would voluntarily seek formal CHL education. Case in point, we issue free passes to each student for our indoor pistol range to be used once they obtain their own handgun or as a means to use a selection of our own personal guns in determining what is best suited to their needs. 400 hundred students and less than 75 have used those passes to date. The reality that we see is that the general public adopts the same concept that Ohio does in evaluating competitive bidders; minimally qualified is qualified. That explains why we are so detailed in our work with our students and why we monitor testing results from every class, independently and inclusively with the whole. Think. What if under options to carry concealed under 178, an individual may decide that a "Shockwave" shot gun, (a legal firearm by Ohio law), with a sling or modified under arm holster is his/her choice. A shot gun as a means of self defense in public settings, the individual with no formal education may not even know where or when deadly force is legal and where he or she may be permitted to carry under established rules. Keep in mind that the "forbidden carry zones" do not need to post standard signage. One of my fears is that a real possibility exists that a large segment of people who decide to carry under 178 won't even know that they don't know what is needed to be responsible. And, that decision to carry a Shockwave by an untrained individual may have serious and very messy side effects.

Finally, I invite this committee to review the new Attorney General's CHL booklet. See how involved some of the basic concepts of legality regarding concealed carry are, even within the context of that concise and informative text. Imagine the statewide liability as a society that may be created by passing a law that fosters ignorance by not requiring formal training.

I offer myself to appear in live testimony before the committee as an opponent to HB 178.

Respectfully submitted by,

John W. Vogel