Hello. My name is Gene Moore. I taught high school science for 39 years, sold firearms for a sporting goods chain for 16 years, and have had a CCW for 15 years. I am here today as an “UPAID” life long RESIDENT OF OHIO to advocate for HB 178.

A 72 year old senior citizen with NO Karate skills, I ALWAYS carry a concealed handgun, even in my own house. Of course, because this “House” is a GUN FREE ZONE, today I am “exposed” to potential violence and unable to defend myself in this target rich environment. THIS IS ILLOGICAL and bordering on insane … but I digress….

Comments and questions at the May 8th meeting revealed some committee members to be poorly informed about firearms and to have already formed a conclusion about HB178. Because it is scientifically impossible to reach a VALID conclusion based on misinformation and bias, I left that meeting wondering if the “expertise” of this committee was adequate for the complexity of this issue.

Therefore, today I would like to offer some “reality” for any open-minded members of this committee willing to let logic supersede emotion.

The real issue here is NOT public safety, individual freedom, or even Constitutional Rights, it is RESPONSIBILITY… the Responsibility of those who sell, own, or carry firearms!

The “selling of firearms” follows stringent government procedures utilizing sophisticated computer background checks to ensure that ONLY RESPONSIBLE, LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS can LEGALLY purchase a firearm; THEREFORE, anyone legally buying a firearm, SHOULD automatically be legally able to carry that weapon for self-defense, should they so choose.

This is the fundamental logic of HB178! IT DOES NOT ALLOW violent criminals or felons to legally carry a firearm, if they’ve been so adjudicated under the Federal prohibited person’s standard. Such individuals are prohibited, by law, from attempting to purchase or own a firearm.

In fact, when “selling firearms”, I was trained to detect problem or illegal purchases! If I had any reservations about a potential buyer, I would notify my manager, and the transaction would be stopped immediately. This is what a Responsible gun dealer does, and the vast majority of firearm retailers are Responsible.

Responsible people are also responsible gun owners! When, at the age of 12, Santa brought me a shotgun, my father schooled me in the rules of gun safety. The “consequences” of violating those rules were made crystal clear… I would lose my gun, my hunting privileges, and I would not be able to sit down “for a month of Sundays”! Eventually above my headboard hung a full gun rack with NO gun locks, yet, they were NEVER touched other than as instructed. My parents raised a Responsible law-aiding person.

It is the Responsibility of “carrying a firearm,” that is the crux of HB178.

This Responsibility has been well handled by the legal gun-carrying public; and, although the anti-gun media conveniently overlooks incidents where gun owners thwart crime, IT HAPPENS EVERYDAY ACROSS THIS COUNTRY!

When Ohio first sanctioned concealed carry, my son and I, took the required course and enrolled in an additional tactical course focused on real world scenarios. We accepted Responsibility by being properly trained to ensure our safety and the safety of others, and, despite living in a “privileged, white, middle class suburb,” that training has already been critical in three potentially lethal situations!
In fact, the surest way to become a victim is to be unarmed! This was so vividly recounted in earlier testimonies detailing the devastating consequences when evil enters “unarmed” lives.

If every legal gun owning citizen had the option of Constitutional Concealed Carry, EVERYONE BENEFITS, especially those in high crime areas who most need protection, but often cannot afford the required classes.

Some ask “Why do we need Constitutional Concealed Carry?” since we already have Constitutional Open Carry? Simple, OPEN CARRY is NOT a Responsible option.

Even I was a bit uneasy one day, when a man, openly carrying a large revolver, entered our mall store to purchase ammunition. It was his Constitutional Right, but, it was not the “Responsible” thing to do. Out of respect for non-carrying citizens, concealed carry should be the “standard” for self-defense weapons. Out of sight, out of mind!

Each school year I told my students this story: “In the early 60’s I lived in a small town near Akron, and during hunting season, I would strap my shotgun on my bike, don my hunting attire, and peddle down main street to hunt on the outskirts of town. NOT A SINGLE PERSON EVEN TOOK NOTICE! NOT A SINGLE PERSON!!

Students were then asked, “What would happen, IF TODAY, they strapped that SAME GUN on their bike and peddled through town?” Laughter ALWAYS ensued! Why? Simple, because they knew they wouldn’t get far before cops would be all over them. Then I asked, WHY, what had changed?? IT’S THE SAME GUN!! THE SAME GUN!

The answer? SIMPLE … it is today’s AUTOMATIC ASSUMPTION of the LACK OF RESPONSIBILITY, an assumption fostered by politicians who know that only their “expert supervision,” through laws and regulations, can protect us. They give we, the “deplorables,” very little respect as we cling to our guns and religion.” After all, they KNOW that, if we would ONLY give up a few more of our freedoms to “Big Brother,” THEY will keep us safe.

Unfortunately, GOVERNMENT CANNOT LEGISLATE RESPONSIBILITY, nor can it KEEP US SAFE from EVIL by passing “more laws”. IF more laws were the solution, drunk driving and drug abuse would have disappeared long ago!

LAWS CANNOT STOP EVIL PEOPLE, but, ARMED CITIZENS CAN!

During the recent VIRGINIA BEACH shootings, in another “GUN FREE ZONE,” twelve people were murdered by a disgruntled co-worker. One victim, Kate Nixon, was well aware of the dangers posed by this deranged man. She considered carrying her legal gun to work for self-defense, but didn’t due to the CITY’S BAN on employees legally carrying firearms at work! EVIL PEOPLE DO NOT FOLLOW LAWS and they definitely prefer defenseless victims!

Because “the police arrive 15 minutes after a crime” (and I say that having a son-in-law who is a policeman), only a “law-abiding, gun-carrying citizen,” like Kate Nixon, could have stopped this evil coward! In fact, legally armed citizens have the best chance to prevent many, if not most, crimes, and often without firing a shot!

During one potentially lethal situation, my young son thwarted two large thugs demanding money by using only his confident demeanor, made possible by the handgun he held under his jacket. Only half their size, as they stepped toward him, he looked them in the eyes and confidently told
them, “You don’t want to push this!” Startled by this skinny kid’s bravado, they turned and ran off! Without concealed carry, I hate to think what the outcome might have been. Of course, 15 minutes later, the police arrived!

**ONLY WE, AS RESPONSIBLE LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS, CAN PROTECT OURSELVES!**

As our representatives, you must **TRUST** the **RESPONSIBILITY** of your **LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS**! We do it every day in other areas, for example, we trust that other drivers in the opposing lane will drive Responsibly by following the Rules of the Road. Likewise, we must trust that other legally armed citizens will be Responsible and follow the rules of safe concealed carry.

So the **REAL QUESTION** inherent in passing **HB 178** is, “Can RESPONSIBLE, LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS be trusted to Responsibly exercise their **CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT** to bear arms without government interference or supervision?”

**YES THEY CAN!** And frankly, I would rather trust my fellow law-abiding citizens than trust government, **BECAUSE GOVERNMENT FAILS FAR TOO OFTEN!**

During one year of the Obama administration, the FBI submitted over **30,000 NICS OFFENDERS** to the Justice Department for prosecution. These were **FELONS**, who illegally attempted to buy firearms, but were caught by the NICS background check.

Amazingly, Obama’s Justice Department prosecuted to completion **ONLY 13 CASES** … a **MAJOR FAIL**, but then **NOT A SURPRISE**, after all, it was this **same administration** that illegally sold guns to Mexican drug cartels during **Fast and Furious!** Another **MAJOR FAIL**!

**Protecting my own life is MY CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT, and MY RESPONSIBILITY**, and, if I were still teaching, I would gladly carry my handgun, and, if necessary, lay down my life to protect my students against evil. It’s called **RESPONSIBILITY!** Of course, **IF SCHOOLS WERE NOT GUN FREE ZONES**, such evil **WOULD NOT OCCUR** in the first place.

**HB178** is simply the **logical restoration** of our **Constitutional Rights** that will help make Responsible, Law Abiding Americans **safer from crime and even terrorism**. During WWII, the Japanese military admittedly understood, as do today’s criminals and terrorists, that you **don’t mess with an armed American citizenry**.

It is time for you, **OUR** elected representatives, regardless of personal bias, to **UPHOLD THE CONSTITUTION**, believe in the **RESPONSIBILITY OF YOUR CITIZENS**, and return the **FULL RIGHTS** of the 2nd Amendment to Ohio’s citizens to protect our families and ourselves **without government oversight or regulations**.

**HB178 is YOUR OPPORTUNITY** to show that you **BELIEVE IN THE RESPONSIBILITY OF YOUR CITIZENS!**