

Date: January 17, 2020

Subject: Proponent Testimony presented to the Ohio State 133rd General Assembly

Reference: Sub. S. B. No. 147 to establish the Ohio State School Marshal Program and to establish procedure to petition a probate court for a protection order to secure household deadly weapons away from a dangerous minor.

On the proposal to form a School Marshal Program, this is perhaps the most contentious of the two parts of this proposal with two opposing sides to the argument over having armed personnel in the schools or make the schools gun free zones. Statistics point out that attacks are most likely to occur at locations that are least protected and less likely to happen or at least minimal damage done when trained individuals with firearms are nearby to take immediate action. At best First Responders are minutes away when seconds count.

Looking to the future and that Ohio approves the proposal to establish the School Marshal Program that is a positive first step to ensure the schools of Ohio are better protected against the threat of violence from an Active Shooter/s.

Upon approval of the School Marshal Program will then come the political/turf battle over who is in charge and how best to implement the new program. That hurdle needs to be cleared first before the actual program can be properly developed. For obvious reasons there must be Law Enforcement involvement as they are the First Responders along with Medical Teams as well are Fire Fighters, all who have crucial roles to play.

All these First Responder elements hopefully would embrace the idea of having an inside deterrent to armed threats to the Students and Faculty within the School complex. That is the Mission of the School Marshals, who is most knowledgeable of the Schools Environment and can make a difference in lives lost because of their presence on Campus.

This of course is a simplified overview as there will be a list of relevant duties for School Marshals which would include coordination with local and State Law enforcement and as well School Marshal should be accepted as a unique branch within the Law Enforcement mechanism of the State. (This is similar to the establishment of Homeland Security and the Sky Marshal Programs established after 911)

The basic model for the School Marshal Program would consist of Recruitment and Selection of Candidates and training to include a top tier Firearms Training Course, School Marshalls should possess a high level of Marksmanship and Tactical skills to work within the School Environment. Routine Requalification would be mandatory. They would also be required to partake in Medical TCCC/First responder Training, and Development of tactics specific to handling and Active Shooter Scenario. Again, this is a basic overview.

As to the second part of Sub. S.B. 147, to petition a probate court for protection order to secure household deadly weapons from a dangerous minor; The School Marshal should be an integral part of this process, serving as part of the Team of Medical, Legal and Law Enforcement personnel involved in this process.

In Conclusion; Adopting the School Marshall Program is a sound proposal. The program would fill the gap that presently exists with regards to Ohio State School Safety and Security.