



OHIO ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE

Testimony in Opposition to HB 142

Chief Heinz von Eckartsberg, Dublin Police Department

Representing the OACP

Good afternoon Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Lipps, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the House Federalism and Interstate Relations Committee.

My name is Heinz von Eckartsberg. I am the Chief of Police for the Dublin Police Department. I am submitting testimony in opposition to HB 142 on behalf of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police.

The Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police is supportive of Ohioans right to keep and bear arms. We do believe, however, that it is important for Ohio law to maintain a requirement for concealed carry holders to inform law enforcement officers, when stopped for a “law enforcement purpose,” that they are in possession of a firearm. We feel that this requirement is important for the following reasons:

1. Law enforcement officers are trained to be professional, yet cautious during any law enforcement encounter. If they are not informed that a CCW holder is present, with a firearm, a dangerous condition could result if the officer sees the firearm during the course of the encounter.
2. Although it is possible that an officer may be aware that the owner of a vehicle stopped is a CCW holder (after running the car’s registration), an officer would have no way of knowing in advance if passengers in a vehicle are CCW holders in possession of a firearm.
3. Officers have no way of knowing in advance that a person on foot who is stopped is, or is not a CCW holder.

Law enforcement officers in Ohio make hundreds of thousands of traffic and pedestrian stops each year. The vast majority of those stops are conducted in a professional and safe manner. We have heard from proponents of this legislation about a very small number of cases where the law may have been applied improperly. This is not the norm. In fact, the case presented to this committee involved an officer whose conduct appeared to be unprofessional and excessive regardless of the issue at hand.

The Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police is not interested in restricting CCW holder’s rights. Instead, we would like to ensure the law provides a safe and practical process whereby the CCW holder can communicate to law enforcement that they are in possession of a firearm. This knowledge will not incriminate the CCW holder. It will, however, help to ensure that the law enforcement encounter is conducted safely and professionally.

Thank you for your consideration and for allowing me to provide written testimony to the committee.