



**NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION
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John Hohenwarter
State Liaison

Memorandum of Support

Date: July 5, 2017

To: Honorable Members of House Federalism & Interstate Relations

From: John Hohenwarter, State Liaison

RE: House Bill 201

On behalf of the National Rifle Association of America, I would like to express our support for House Bill 201, introduced by Representative Ron Hood (R-78) and Representative Tom Brinkman (R-27). House Bill 201 would repeal the existing provision of law that requires a person to have a pistol/revolver license in order to carry a concealed handgun. Currently, twelve states recognize an individual's right to carry concealed without a permit; Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, Kansas, Maine, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, North Dakota, West Virginia, and Wyoming have enacted laws similar to House Bill 201, while Vermont has always respected the right to carry without a permit.

In Ohio, current law allows any law-abiding citizen who can legally own or possess a firearm to carry it openly, either loaded or unloaded, anywhere in the state not prohibited by state or federal law. The difference between a firearm carried openly and a firearm carried concealed can be as insignificant as the donning of a coat. The current licensing system in Ohio requires law-abiding citizens to pay a fee and endure a relatively significant bureaucratic process, so they can simply wear a coat or place their firearm in their purse.

While House Bill 201 would repeal the requirement to obtain a license in order to carry concealed, the current carry licensing system will be left intact. License holders will still be able to continue participating in reciprocal concealed carry license agreements when traveling in one of the current 40 designated states.

Only law-abiding citizens are currently obtaining licenses to carry concealed handguns. Allowing these citizens to carry concealed without the license will not change the fact they obey the law. Criminals, on the other hand, have no regard for the law and are already carrying concealed handguns without licenses. Those with existing criminal records, who are prohibited from owning or possessing firearms, can be prosecuted for mere possession. Those with no prior record, but who commit a crime in conjunction with concealed carry, can be charged and prosecuted as well.

This year, with your support, the passage of this legislation will make Ohio the thirteenth state to recognize this inherent right of self-defense. Please feel free to contact me at 703-267-1208 if you have additional questions or concerns. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.