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### Committees

Finance-Higher Education Subcommittee-Chair  
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Health, Human Services and Medicaid  
Rules and Reference

## **SPONSOR TESTIMONY – SENATE BILL 231**

**Senator Randy Gardner – Majority Floor Leader**

*Senate Judiciary Committee*

November 28, 2017

Mr. Chairman. Vice chairman Dolan. Ranking member Thomas.

Thank you for allowing me to present Senate Bill 231, which appears on the calendar to be the first hearing but is actually your committee's fifth hearing on this bill – heard four times before as Senate Bill 67.

Indeed this is the second substitute version of this legislation which contains two fundamental enhancements to Ohio law: 1. A statewide law enforcement database for the felony offenses of Aggravated Murder, Murder, Voluntary Manslaughter, Kidnapping and Abduction and the conspiracy, complicity or attempt to commit those crimes. 2. The ability for citizens to visit a county sheriff's office to have access to where those convicted of those crimes reside.

Please join with me, the Attorney General of Ohio, the Buckeye State Sheriffs Association and others who believe law enforcement's ability to protect the public safety will be improved through this database. Law enforcement will be able to react faster to a crime or suspected crime so that lives can be saved.

For citizens, as Sheriff Mark Wasylyshyn, president of the Buckeye State Sheriffs Association said to this committee, "knowledge is power." Providing citizens with this information can help them become more aware and make safer decisions. An example would be this: Your 19-year-old daughter is moving to a new city to go to college and is looking at apartments. She decides on one, but you would like to know if anyone who would be living across the hall from her has a violent felony record. You would like to know. It seems to be a reasonable, fair question to ask. Today in Ohio that information is not available.

Please know that I have worked closely with many of the interested parties on this issue, including the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, Attorney General's Office, Buckeye State Sheriffs Association, and consulted with prosecutors and judges.

I want you to know that most of my time in recent months has been meeting with and listening to those who spoke to you in opposition to this bill at previous hearings, those who especially believe in redemption, restoration and reintegration of those who have been in Ohio's prisons. Nearly a dozen changes to this bill have been made following either criticisms, concerns and requests made by those involved in re-entry programs. Colleagues, that is the way it should work at the Statehouse.

Today I ask that you carefully consider all of the changes that have been made to this bill, and in the days ahead decide if there is anything else we can do to enhance our efforts toward a more informed public and to better equip our law enforcement professionals to help protect us. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.