



**State Representative Christina M. Hagan**

Ohio House District 50

**House Bill 529**

**Ohio House State Government Committee**

**May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

Chairman Maag, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Slesnick and members of the House State Government Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify as well on behalf of House Bill 529, the SWAT and EMT Carry Bill.

I am thankful to stand and work beside Representative Retherford on this important legislation. As a sister of a paramedic serving on SWAT here in Ohio, this legislation could not bear more weight. When my brother leaves Northeast Ohio to serve here in Columbus nearly every other day, as his family, we often contemplate his safety and ability to protect himself and others when operating alongside his colleagues in a tactical fashion during difficult and dangerous situations.

What most don't know is that these medical professionals train shoulder to shoulder with their peers on the professional SWAT teams. I have recently spent time with our tactical training facility professionals in Alliance who are nationally recognized for their efforts. We discussed in great detail the need for this legislation with our officers who train alongside the nation's elite including the FBI. I feel confident that the requirements and guidelines that this bill will bring into law will create certainty and clarity for local administrations who have hesitated to move forward on allowing their medical personnel in these environments to carry a handgun for such purposes as previously described.

This is a common sense measure intended to protect our first responders as they work to serve and defend our communities. It is needed to provide a framework for the application of such practices and necessary to alleviate concerns of locals who have a desire to move forward in providing training and protection to these vulnerable public servants. We appreciate you taking the time to vet this legislation and look forward to answering any questions you might have at this time.