

## House Bill 341 – Sponsor Testimony

State Rep. Jack Cera

House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee

Wednesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Thank you Chairman Blessing, Vice Chair Reineke, and Ranking Member Clyde for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 341.

To my colleagues on the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee:

On August 21<sup>st</sup>, Judge Joseph J. Bruzzese, Jr. and a probation officer made their way to the Jefferson County Court House to begin their work day. As they approached the courthouse where the Judge has served on the Jefferson County Court of Common Pleas for 20 years, shots rang out. Both the probation officer and Judge drew guns and fired back at the shooter.

In the matter of just a few moments.....a well-liked Judge in my district was wounded and the person shooting at the Judge was dead. Local authorities considered this an ambush and attempted murder on the Judge.

As explained by Rep. Huffman in his testimony, HB 341 is a necessary safety measure, a protection for our judges. While it may not have helped in this particular case, the incident shows the need to look at ways to protect our judges further.

In closing, I want to thank Rep. Huffman for asking me to join in this effort to offer our judges some additional protection as joint sponsor on this proposal. I ask for your favorable consideration and I will be happy to address any questions or concerns from the committee.