



FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE OF OHIO, INC.

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Testimony on SB 208

Senate Judiciary Committee

November 28th, 2017

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Chairman Bacon and Members of the Committee,

My name is Brian Steel and I'm here today to give proponent testimony to Senate Bill (SB) 208 on behalf of the Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio (FOP). Currently, I'm a sergeant with the largest police agency in Ohio, while also serving as a legislative agent for the FOP. I am proud to represent over 25,000 full time law enforcement professionals that risk their lives on a daily basis protecting members of our communities. The FOP's membership includes municipal officers, county deputies, township officers, and officers from most state law enforcement agencies (including OSP, OIU, ODNR, BCI and others).

The FOP strongly supports SB 208, and thanks Senator Terhar along with the co-sponsors. SB 208 allows off duty law enforcement officers to carry firearms in the same manner as on duty officers with some common sense restrictions. Those restrictions include: not carrying a firearm when consuming beer or intoxicating liquor, in a courthouse, and where prohibited under federal law.

These off duty officers have successfully completed 60 hours of firearms training in the academy which included a minimum of 46 hours of live-fire training exercises on the range. The course required each officer to fire a minimum of 750 rounds of handgun ammunition, 75 rounds of pelleted shotgun ammunition, and 20 rounds of shotgun slugs. Officers are required every year to effectively complete a firearms requalification program approved by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission.

Unfortunately, this change in Ohio law has been made necessary by the growing threat of violence against police officers and brazen attacks on soft civilian targets by mass shooters. The number of ambushes on officers continues to rise nationwide, and anti police groups are now actively searching out officers homes and laying siege to them. Nationwide off duty officers have ended mass shootings in shopping malls and intervened in scores of crimes in progress.

On behalf of the Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony to SB 208. I will be happy to address any questions that you may have at this time.