I would like to thank you for letting me express my views on house bill 79.

I am an orthopaedic surgeon in Canton, Ohio specializing in the upper extremity.  In January of this year, I was asked to join the Canton special weapons and tactics team (SWAT).

Over the past 1 year, I participated in training 2 times per month.  I have become proficient as a marksman and participate in all aspects of shooting drills along with tactics.

Over the past 6 months, I have practiced numerous times, including approximately 3000 rounds an hour indoor range.

In addition, I participated in the sniper school for canton SWAT. I was able to hit a 7-inch target from just ½ mile.

My duties encompass taking care of the well-being of all 37 members of our SWAT team.

This includes general health; however, making sure all individuals on a raid have a physician on site.  Each raid that is performed I participate in.

During these raids, I am in the bulletproof vehicle. Upon the completion of the raid, I examine all members of the SWAT team and those individuals being arrested.

In regards to carrying firearms on raids, I strongly believe this is a necessary portion of being a part of a SWAT team.  As a physician, we have taken oath as to do no harm.  However, in the inter city places we are traveling and going raids at, there is always the possibility of being confronted by individuals partaking in criminal activity.

As in general society in Ohio, one never wants to use the CCW for firing a weapon at another individual.  Carrying a CCW in my opinion is one thing that should never be taken lightly.

The problem with being involved with the SWAT team and not being armed centers around CCW/open carry.

Prior to participating in a raid, I am able to carry a weapon under my CCW license. Presently I need to leave that weapon behind and partake in risky activities dealing with individuals in our society that have shown to use weapons towards other individuals.  If needed, I must rescue individuals with gunshot wounds.  It is very difficult at that time knowing that as you go into this battle zone that you are unarmed.  Upon the completion of my mission with the SWAT team I am then allowed to rearm myself with a weapon as I leave headquarters.

I volunteer my time for the SWAT team. We also have 2 medics on our team that are in similar situations as myself.

I volunteer to make sure the 37 gentlemen on our team make it home to their wives and children.  However, I also want to give myself the best ability to make sure I make it home to my family.  Therefore I am in strong support of house bill 79 in being allowed to arm myself during raids in which the SWAT team conducts.

Sincerely,
AKS

Spectrum Orthopaedics