Tequila Ann Williams-Madison S. B. 195 Testimony

584 S. Ashburton Road

Columbus, Ohio 43213

330.208.8681

[Tequilawilliams1110@gmail.com](mailto:Tequilawilliams1110@gmail.com)

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Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

I have wondered what I would say given the opportunity again to speak in support of the Dangerous Dogs Bill……Would I be as emotional, hurt, and angry as before. Would my overwhelming disappointment and anger for this committee ignoring the importance of enforcing S. B. 151, overshadow the importance of me testifying for S. B. 195? The answers to these questions were yes, until I thought about and looked at my daughters who live with vivid memories of our family’s tragedy till this day. S. B. 151 could have prevented other families from living through the horror of a furry friend or loved one being attacked. However, S. B. 195 can still help prevent other families from living through the day to day pain my family lives through 2 years 7 months and 15 days later.

On July 12, 2015, my grandmother Annie Lee Williams, was attacked and killed by a pit bull…a dangerous dog in front of my two daughters ages 7 and 8, my sister age 13, and several neighborhood residents. Everyone says, “Time Heals All Wounds”, this is not so true for my family. Our loss would be easier to understand and accept had it been illness…unpreventable….more natural….but, there is nothing forgettable about a life being taken by the teeth…of a dog…nothing. I have brought one of my daughters who was there that day with me, because she wants to hear and see our **Justice System,** do what is right for her great-grandmother and others. However, my other daughter could not join us today because for her July 12, 2015 is relived everyday…she experiences intrusive vivid thoughts daily, nightly that prevent her from sleeping, that causes her to have suicidal ideations, because she wants her grandmother back and wants to stop seeing her grandmother being killed in front of her….to where at the age of 11, she blames “God”, because she cannot understand how something so horrible could happen…..

My family relives the tragedy of my grandmothers death every day, it has struck fear in us that we didn’t know before, it has made us fearful of other dogs…Simply because no one knows when or if a dog will attack and we are not willing to take a chance on loosing anther loved one…Because, our **Justice System** values a dog’s life more than the lives of women, men, and children…. We create laws daily against people for the safety of the people…What is so different about creating laws, safety measures to protect the people from dangerous animals? Is our life less important because it’s better to be hurt, scarred forever, or killed by a dog than another person?

I am not angry anymore….I will forever experience pain from this tragedy as long as my children still suffer from the hands of others irresponsible actions; as long as I know our **Justice System,** which is supposed to protect us, is doing nothing…Is sitting on their hands allowing the possibilities of dangerous dog attacks to continue…..I am disappointed that we as people cannot agree on the importance…the need for preventative measures to be put in place to protect our babies, mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, grandparents, our families….Our right to safety is being ignored….the right to feel safe walking down your street, because you know your neighbor’s dog is on a leash….because you know that people are being more responsible because there are consequences…because dogs that are just simply dangerous by nature will be recognized as such and steps will be taken to keep them from harming or killing another human being or animal….

I ask the committee to think long and hard about S.B. 195 and the good it can do….I ask the committee to ask yourselves, “What if you were attacked or a loved one, or killed by a dangerous dog, or due to an irresponsible dog owner?”, “What would you want your **Justice System** to do?” I ask that this committee do what is right by, my grandmother Annie Williams, by others that have been attacked or have lost a furry friend or loved one to a dangerous dog….by passing S.B. 195 to help prevent the neglect and abuse to dogs causing them to be dangerous, to prevent the ownership of those dogs which are just dangerous by nature, to prevent future attacks on other animals and people, and most importantly to prevent the loss of life by the teeth of a dangerous dog……

Sincerely,

Tequila Ann Williams-Madison