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Tim Schaffer

State Senator, 20th Senate District

Senate General Government and Agency Review Committee Senate Bill 187 — Sponsor Testimony Wednesday October 9, 2019

Chairman Schuring, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member O'Brien, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 187.

The bill fine-tunes Ohio's obscenity laws regarding performances by minors. Senate Bill 187 is about protecting children from being exploited.

Late last year, a ten year old boy performed at a local bar in my district in what was portrayed as a charity fundraiser. According to reports I have received, it was discovered that this child was in the bar performing a provocative dance routine while patrons watched and many handed the child tips.

The bill recognizes two things:

- There are appropriate times, places and manners of free expression
- A minor in a liquor permit premises late at night performing for tips is never an appropriate time, place or manner.

Let's be clear: **No child should be dancing for tips in a bar!** This type of performance is clearly the wrong signal to send to children, and it causes confusion for kids who are taught not to accept things of value from strangers.

Furthermore, in an age when we are fighting human trafficking with everything we have, these performances teach youth that their bodies can be used to make money.

We must do better to protect these children from human trafficking. Performances like this create a gateway to the trafficking of children, a "soft landing" for acceptance of human trafficking in our society.

This bill protects our society's most vulnerable citizens from being exploited-- children. We should not be part of a system that allows a break down of societal barriers that have protected children from predators for years.

Thank you once again, Chairman Schuring and the members of the committee, for the opportunity to present this issue to you today. I will be glad to answer any questions at this time.