

To Whom It may concern:

Re: House Bill 22

My name is Cathy Moore, I am a resident of Ohio, have lived here for 45 years, and I am a voter. I live in Columbus Ohio at 1951 Rockdale Dr. on the north east side of Columbus.

I am very concerned that you are considering a bill that would make it a felony for any type of “perceived threat” in the event of a peaceful protest. When people are protesting it is because they feel unheard. To solve this problem leaders need to listen to the concerns of their citizens, not penalize them for speaking up and enacting their first amendment rights. Criminalizing free speech and thus silencing these citizens prevents us from coming together and moving forward. Remember without peaceful protests the US would have never come to be. So much important social change has come about as a result of peaceful protest. Public protests are instrumental to our shared history, and restricting it would be a betrayal of our founders and ancestors.

The supreme court has already said that streets and sidewalks have “immemorially been held in trust for the use of the public” to make our voices heard.

Introducing and advancing bills that create new crimes or place additional penalties into state law lead to overcrowded prisons costing taxpayers billions each year. In these and other ways, I feel this bill would be moving in the exact opposite direction of where we should be heading. **Please say NO to House Bill 22.**

Thank you for your attention and consideration of my testimony