

March 15, 2021

Dear Chairman LaRe,

I along with many more opponents, object to the passage of HB 22. In a time when our communities are speaking out about the heavy hand of the law, **legislators are attempting to bring down the hammer harder**, dividing us further. The purpose of this bill and 3 other anti free speech and right to assemble bills target those community members who need to express their distress at current handling of laws, rights, environmental justice issues, targeting certain populations of citizens, and so many more reasons we participate in non-violent actions.

In 1970 on the campus of Ohio University where I was a junior in college, thousands of students took to the streets to protest the unnecessary and unlawful shooting of Kent State students. One of those students is my good friend Dean Kahler. Dean was shot and severely injured and is spending his life in a wheelchair. When the students were ordered to leave the OU campus, I had to stay until I could get a ride home to Toledo. The Ohio National Guard was called in to rein us in. The guardsmen lined the streets of Athens, rifles in hand. We tried to engage in conversation, under HB 22, we would have been charged with distraction and be charged with a felony. We put flowers in their gun barrels, under HB 22 we would be charged, again, with a felony for placing an object in their way.

Really Chairman LaRe? You think you are protecting the police, but what you will accomplish is quashing and chilling our rights to actions we have been privileged to for generations.

It is shameful that all of these years I have believed in our democracy only to see it crushed by the ill thought out laws that you and your fellow Republicans dream up in an attempt to make us all stop.