

Jeff LaRe

House Criminal Justice Committee

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Oppose House Bill 22

Hello Chairman LaRe, Ranking member Leland, and the entire House Criminal Justice Committee. My name is Jacob Chang, and I am President of the Undergraduate Student Government at The Ohio State University. Thank you for taking the time to give me a platform to provide testimony.

As President of the undergraduate student body, I represent 53, 557 students covering The Ohio State University Main-Campus and each of our four regional campuses. On behalf of my constituency and as a resident of Ohio, I urge the House Criminal Justice Committee to vote no to H.B. 22. My reasoning behind this lies in H.B. 22 being an over reach of power given to police in the state of Ohio, power which they have proven they cannot and should not carry. As well as being an infringement of the civil right of all Ohioans.

My first issue comes from lines 28-31 of H.B. 22 which states that: Prevent or obstruct any person, by means of force, intimidation, or deception, from performing any act to aid in the discovery, apprehension, or prosecution of the other person or child, and lines 34-38 which states: No person shall do any of the following to a law enforcement officer in the performance of the law enforcement officer's duties with reckless disregard as to whether the action diverts or obstructs the law enforcement officer's attention. These sections within H.B. 22 infringe upon Ohioans civil liberties as by the First Amendment within the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights to record law enforcement. The First Amendment grants all Americans the freedom of speech and in doing so we have the ability to criticize the government granting us the right to criticize the police as well. In addition, we have the freedom of press, which applies to citizen journalists and documentarians just as it does to formal members of the press. Because of both of our freedoms granted to us by the First Amendment it is within our right to record law enforcement, however H.B. 22 limits us from doing so.

Another issue I find with H.B. 22 is that it directly gives more power to law enforcement within the state of Ohio. Power in which law enforcement in Ohio does not need and should not have. Julius Tate Jr., Casey Goodson Jr., Andre Hill and Ma'Khia Bryant and many more names

will fall to being murdered by Ohio law enforcement if H.B. 22 is passed. Ohio law enforcement has proven they cannot wield the power given to them so why should this very committee grant them more power? Last summer many of the students in which I was elected to represent took to the streets to protest against racial violence and police brutality across the nation, exercising their First Amendment right. Ohio State students and Ohio citizens were pepper sprayed, hit with rubber bullets, tear gassed and arrested. Many of them had videos documenting the unnecessary violence they were met with by Ohio law enforcement. With the approval of H.B. 22 this documentation could cease to exist and would benefit law enforcement. Furthermore, Derek Chauvin was found guilty due to the evidence that was documented by citizens of Minnesota. Had a bill like this existed, there would be no accountability nor would there be peace to an unlawful murder carried out by law enforcement.

Today, this committee has the power to fully take in what myself and others who oppose H.B. 22 have said. As this is not just a bill that would infringe the civil rights of Ohioans and Ohio State students, it would lead to law enforcement in Ohio being granted a power that would let them get away with anything as long as they wield a badge. Ohio law enforcement has proven they cannot wield their power let alone effectively carry out their job, which is why I urge the House Criminal Justice Committee to oppose H.B. 22. Thank you for your time and this opportunity to testify.