



OHIO CONFERENCE NAACP

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
Serving Ohioans Since 1930

PO Box 29014, Columbus, Ohio 43229

April 20, 2021

State Representative Jeff LaRe
Criminal Justice Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

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Dear Honorable LaRe,

The NAACP Ohio Conference oppose the introduction on House Bill 22 to amend *section 2921.32 of the Revised Code to expand the offense of obstructing justice to include failure to follow a lawful order from a law enforcement officer or diverting a law enforcement officer's attention.*

The language in this bill will prevent innocent bystanders from exercising their Sixth Amendment rights per the US Constitution. If this bill is brought out of committee will prevent those witnessing aggressive or excessive force by law enforcement from presenting any evidence of the force in questions by destroying evidence and possible arrest, fined and charged of the person observing the action.

This is a dangerous bill if it comes out of Committee. With the excessive force issues among our law enforcement here in Ohio and across the Country, the timing of this bill is inappropriate and insensitive to many Communities of Color. What this bill is saying if we were ever faced with a George Floyd situation that the witness's cellphone videos could be destroyed and they could face arrest. This bill could set freedom to law enforcement officers who apply excessive force to a detainee and just may happen to be a bad seed among the force. If the bill is passed out of Committee, it will cause even more disconnect/distrust among Communities of Color.

We are demanding that the Ohio House of Representative throw this bill out and again look at fair and unbiased legislations that represents all people in Ohio.

Yours in the Struggle,

Tom Roberts

Former State Senator Tom Roberts
Ohio State Conference President