

Every city and county in Ohio already can already prosecute citizens for intentionally obstructing cars or pedestrians, or for trespassing on private property. Law enforcement officers already have the necessary tools to respond to violent criminals and vigilantes. The Supreme Court has upheld the right of people to make their voices heard by gathering in public places. We MUST honor our First Amendment right to free speech and protest if we are to uphold our Constitution and remain a democracy. HB 22 would add a penalty for diverting attention of law enforcement personnel. Surely officers are trained - or should be trained - to prioritize their attention. Should the bystanders in the George Floyd case have been arrested? I think not. Without police accountability, citizens cannot trust those who have pledged to serve and protect us.