



## Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

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House Bill 276  
Written Proponent Testimony  
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Chairman LaRe, Vice-Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on House Bill 276 to create the offense of receiving proceeds of prostitution and to include that offense in the list of offenses that constitute corrupt activity. We'd also like to thank the bill sponsors Representatives Powell and Schmidt for their work on this piece of legislation, their willingness to address a couple of concerns that we had that were resolved by amendments last Spring, and for their advocacy on behalf of the victims of human trafficking.

Ohio consistently has had one of the highest rates in the nation of sexually trafficked people. Last year, the General Assembly took the important step of going after the demand side of this problem when it enacted House Bill 431 that, among other things, separated the act of buying sex from the act of selling sex and provided harsher penalties for buying sex. House Bill 276 is another important step that the legislature can and should take – this time going after the supply side of the problem. The bill would continue to further the recognition in Ohio that prostitutes are often victims who are being exploited by a third party for profit. We currently, on the front end, criminalize the act of compelling another to engage in sexual activity for hire through both our human trafficking statute and our compelling prostitution statute. House Bill 276 would provide prosecutors a tool on the back end of the transaction by criminalizing the receipt of the proceeds that were earned by a prostitute from that sexual activity for hire. This is important for at least two reasons. First, profit is the ultimate motive of human trafficking schemes and the receipt of that profit should be a criminal act in its own right. Second, it is often difficult to prove that someone has been compelled to engage in sexual activity for hire, particularly given the reluctance of many victims to testify against their trafficker. The bill will allow prosecutors to obtain convictions without re-traumatizing the victims of the exploitation and without necessarily proving that the sexual activity was compelled.

House Bill 276 is another important tool in the law enforcement toolbox for combatting the scourge of human trafficking and we encourage the committee's favorable consideration. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony.