

House Criminal Justice Committee
Proponent Testimony
Ohio House Bill 315
Written Testimony Only

Jeanne Weiland

April 4, 2022

Dear Chairman LaRae and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee:

My name is Jeanne Weiland and I am a resident of Cincinnati in Hamilton County, Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Ohio House Bill 315, which I strongly support and to OPPOSE the newly proposed HJR2.

When I was a teenager, my dad was arrested, accused of a white collar crime. He was released on his Own Recognizance while awaiting trial. To be honest, I never knew this and had never even thought about it until I began working on Bail Reform with the ACLU action team in 2020. Because my dad was released on his own recognizance, my brothers and I were never impacted during his pre-trial period. He went back to work and made sure that, for us, life went on like normal.

Sadly, my dad spent time in prison. While there he quickly recognized the INjustice of the Criminal Justice system. That was back in the 70's. Soon after his release he became involved with and served on the board of Talbert House and began fighting for reform. He tells me that, unfortunately, the system hasn't improved much in all those years. His whiteness, status and privilege allowed my brothers and me to have a normal life pre-trial, but that is not the case for so many, especially Black people and people with low incomes. It is still a two-tiered, wealth based detention system. BUT, Ohio House Bill 315, AS WRITTEN, would change that so that more people could be released on their own recognizance and more children could have the experience that my brothers and I had, rather than experiencing the fear, confusion, anger and shame of having a parent detained before having a chance to prove their innocence or be found guilty.

As my dad realized long ago and still says today at age 92, change is overdue. I say, the time is now and I fervently hope that the HB315 is passed during my dad's lifetime. I ask you to consider my testimony and support HB315. Please do NOT pass HJR2. It does not make the changes needed to address the issues I mention above and does not increase public safety as claimed.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Jeanne Weiland