

House Criminal Justice Committee
Opponent Testimony
House Joint Resolution 2

Written Testimony Only

Connie Hammond

April 4, 2022

Dear Chairman LaRe, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee.

My name is Connie Hammond, and I live in Columbus, Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony **opposition House Joint Resolution 2**.

I oppose HJR 2 because it doubles down on the failed status quo rather than meeting Ohioans' needs and harms disproportionately people with low incomes. On any given day, there are as many as 12,000 legally innocent people held in Ohio's jails, many of whom are locked up because they cannot afford the cash bail amount set in their case. During their pretrial detention, they suffer loss of income, loss of jobs and the legal support that they need.

I am also concerned about the significant racial disparities in the application of the cash bail system. Our justice system is based on the principle that a person is innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. The only valid reason for pre-trial detention is dangerousness to society that should be determined without discrimination.

Wealth-based detention is just wrong. Wealthy people who guilty and released on bail are the danger to the community while on any given day as many as 12,000 innocent people are held in Ohio jails because they cannot afford the cash bail set in their case.

I would also urge to support House Bill 315 that would provide meaningful comprehensive bail reform. House Bill 315 makes our communities safer by giving courts and prosecutors tools to protect public safety while at the same time ending the wealth-based detention that harms so many of our neighbors.

I urge you to vote no if given the opportunity to vote on HJR2 and support HB 315.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Connie Hammond