



HOUSE CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE – Written Proponent Testimony, HB 699,  
December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022

Chairman LaRe, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the committee, thank you for holding this hearing and for the opportunity to provide written testimony.

Legislative efforts related to criminal justice reform (CJR) have been a major priority for AFP – Ohio over the past several years and pursuing effective CJR policy is one of nine “Priority Initiatives” on a national level within my organization. AFP believes that an effective criminal justice system protects people and preserves public safety, respects human dignity, restores victims, removes barriers to opportunity for those with criminal records, and ensures equal justice for all.

Therefore, AFP is supportive of the overwhelming majority of the policy proposals contained within HB 699, and the earned credit provisions top the list in terms of prioritization. Increasing the maximum amount of earned credit that a prisoner may receive for participating in or for completing certain programming from 8% to 15% of their prison term is a positive step forward. If incarcerated individuals are actively making strides toward rehabilitation while in prison, those efforts toward self-betterment should be rewarded. Granting shorter sentences to those who have earned them is a mutually beneficial proposal to taxpayers and the public as well. If prisoners have demonstrated that they are rehabilitated, allowing them to leave prison sooner will save taxpayer dollars, and will allow businesses and communities to utilize their talents as employees, volunteers, and as friends and neighbors.

Additionally, my organization is strongly supportive of the provisions in the bill regarding collateral sanctions and occupational licensing, as well as those affecting expungement and sealing procedures and eligibility.

AFP would also like to thank Representatives Seitz and Galonski for bringing forward this companion bill to SB 288, as well as Senate President Huffman and Senator Manning for prioritizing these criminal justice reforms, which will ultimately lead to a safer, fairer, more prosperous Ohio.

It is AFP's hope and strong recommendation that this committee pass this omnibus CJR package in the final weeks of the 134<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

Thank you.

Jeff Dillon  
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Americans for Prosperity

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