



Representative Scott Wiggam

1st House District

Chairman Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Government Oversight Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on H.B. 325.

House Bill 325 will protect the rights of Ohioans to purchase, possess, carry, transport, train, and use firearms in conjunction with exercising their rights to protect themselves and feed their families.

The bill defines these rights as essential and life sustaining and prevents both local and state governments from infringing on these rights under the declaration of emergency. It covers firearms commerce, concealed carry license processing, firearms training, access to firearm ranges, as well as hunting and fishing related businesses.

During the COVID pandemic, it became evident that local, state, and federal governments have wide powers to declare an emergency and implement restrictions on citizens' rights.

Fortunately, in Ohio, these powers were not used to infringe on second amendment rights. However, this was not the case in other states. In Michigan, Governor Whitmer issued Executive Order 2020-42, which closed firearm and ammunition retailers, deeming them as nonessential businesses. She has since gone on to state that she implement these kind of restrictions again. This type of overreach should never be permitted to occur in Ohio.

Similar legislation is already in place in 24 other states, including most of our neighboring states: Indiana, Kentucky, and West Virginia.

It is important to note that this bill does not expand current firearm related rights. It simply clarifies that people cannot have their rights taken away during a declared emergency. I thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony and will take any questions from the committee.