



Buckeye Firearms Association

Testimony of Rob Sexton

On behalf of Buckeye Firearms Association

Before the House Government Oversight Committee

February 8th, 2022, 10:00 AM

Chairman Wilkin, members of the House Government Oversight Committee, I am Rob Sexton, Legislative Affairs Director for Buckeye Firearms Association.

I am here to speak as a proponent of Representative Stoltzfus's House Bill 455, which would recognize an important distinction between intentional criminal behavior and a simple mistake. House Bill 455 is a simple and straight forward bill that would allow a person who carries a firearm in a prohibited place to go uncharged if they leave the prohibited premises when asked.

The situation addressed by HB 455 is one where no violent or criminal activity has taken place. It is simply one where a mistake has been made, with no malice or intent to do harm. For example, in many cases signs prohibiting the carrying of a firearm are not prominently displayed or are easy to miss in a crowd of customers.

Mr. Chairman, we're at a time where it is frequently reported that our jails are over-populated, and people are over charged with crimes. It has often been stated that reforms are needed. In that vein, this legislation is an easy approach to that problem. HB 455 makes a commonsense distinction between a simple oversight and criminal intent.

HB 455 maintains criminal penalties for those who refuse or fail to leave upon being discovered and being requested to leave by the prohibited business. And it would also penalize those who return to the same business while armed within 30 days.

Also, notably, HB 455 would allow the governing body of a government facility to permit all or certain specific licensees to carry a concealed handgun into the building or any portion of the building. This continues the trend of allowing localized control of this issue, much like area businesses. And it potentially removes yet one more place where criminals know victims will be unarmed and vulnerable to attack.

For these reasons Buckeye Firearms Association asks for your support for HB 455, and passage out of this committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I am happy to answer any questions you may have.