



Buckeye Firearms Association

Testimony of Rob Sexton

On behalf of Buckeye Firearms Association

Before the House Government Oversight Committee

February 9th, 2022, 10:30

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

I am here to express our strong support for Senator Johnson's Senate Bill 215. This bill would remove many burdens on law-abiding gun owners which do nothing to reduce crime or save lives.

This committee is very familiar with the intent of Senate Bill 215, as you have previously passed HB 227, which has identical intent. SB 215 takes a simpler approach to the same issue. Like HB 227, SB 215 would create what is often referred to as Permitless Carry, License Optional Carry, or Constitutional Carry, which is the ability for law-abiding adults to carry a concealed firearm without licensing or other mandated requirements.

Senate Bill 215 simply allows a person who is not otherwise disqualified, to carry a concealed firearm anywhere they can carry with a Concealed Handgun License. Similar to HB 227, SB 215 also requires a person to inform the first law enforcement officer who asks if they are carrying.

Mr. Chairman, members of the General Assembly have been told ad nauseum that bills like SB 215 will increase violent crime, and even endanger police officers. Proponents including Buckeye Firearms Association have refuted these baseless assertions with a continual barrage of research that proves this to be nothing more than fear mongering. Late last year, BFA shared comprehensive research by the American College of Surgeons which stated in 2018,

“This study demonstrated no statistically significant association between the liberalization of state level firearm carry legislation over the last 30 years and the rates of homicides or other violent crime. Policy efforts aimed at injury prevention and the reduction of firearm-related violence should likely investigate other targets for potential intervention.”

If that is not current enough, additional current research from the Crime Prevention Research Center provided substantial supporting research. Data was compiled from 13 states that had at least three years of data since the enactment of Constitutional Carry. Those states are as follows: Alaska – 03, Arizona – 10, Arkansas – 18, Idaho – 16, Kansas – 15, Kentucky – 19, Maine – 15, Mississippi – 15, Missouri – 17, New Hampshire – 17, North Dakota – 17, West Virginia – 16, Wyoming – 11.

The research findings were significant and relevant to this bill. I would ask members of this committee to recall how many times you have been told that allowing Ohioans to exercise their constitutional rights would result in blood in the streets? This latest research put the lie to that old saw showing a significant drop in the murder rate, and a small but insignificant drop in violent crime.

I ask members of this committee how many times we've been told that this bill uniquely endangers law enforcement officers? This latest research shows no change in the number of law enforcement officers killed in the 13 states that have passed this legislation.

Mr. Chairman, and members of this committee, it is a fact that there has been an epidemic of violence against our police officers, much like there has been an epidemic of violence in general. But as we have repeatedly asserted, these dangers have not come at the hands of law-abiding gun owners, and frankly repeated assertions that Ohio is going to explode in violence if the state finally lives up to its own constitution are insulting, fear mongering, and in many cases outright lies.

This research and volumes of previous research continues to show that this legislation works, and that it gives people back their God given right to defend themselves and the lives of their loved ones. BFA greatly appreciates the time this committee has put into this legislation, and asks for your quick approval of this important bill. Thank you.