



OHIO ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE, INC.

S.B 215
Written Testimony in Opposition
Chief Bruce Pijanowski, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police

Chairman Hoagland, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee. I am Bruce Pijanowski, the Chief of Police for the City of Delaware, representing the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police. Thank you for the opportunity to present you with the concerns of Police Chiefs across the state regarding the elimination of the concealed carry license and the duty to notify that are contained in S. B. 215.

Let me start by making it clear that law enforcement does not support the provisions of SB 215. It is of deep concern to us that we repeatedly find ourselves objecting to the removal of duty to notify, and the elimination of conceal carry licensing. While we say we support the second amendment, that refers to the legal ownership of firearms, along with reasonable regulation to ensure public safety. We do not understand how this legislative body continues to push these provisions given the volume of opponent testimony, and the opposition of the law enforcement organizations. I regret that I could not be present today but would be happy to personally meet with each of you to answer questions and demonstrate to you why the provisions of SB 215 are objectionable to us. Otherwise, my remaining testimony should sound familiar.

OACP would also submit that permissive firearms laws may not be a sound strategy to combat crime and violence. This is the rallying cry of the gun rights lobby, but until it is supported by scholarly research, there must be a balance between Second Amendment rights, community safety and appropriate regulation. OACP would suggest that there is research available that should be given logical consideration before any legislative change is considered.

The Second Amendment does not preclude certain regulations, particularly to ensure legal gun ownership and that there is in the least a basic understanding of the responsibilities of owning and carrying a gun. While we can pass any firearms legislation for political expedience under the flag of the Second Amendment, the question really should be why we are doing it and if it makes sense from a public safety perspective. Those two concepts do not have to be mutually exclusive, just deliberate, and honest in their individual review.

OACP is similarly opposed to the elimination of the duty to notify. The duty to notify an officer on a traffic stop of the presence of a firearm being legally carried establishes the lawful intent of the owner and alleviates any uncertainty in the stop should the officer see a weapon. This is not an unreasonable or unconstitutional requirement. At a time when law enforcement is under enormous stress to de-escalate and improve, avoid confrontation, and to recruit and retain the qualified candidates that will fuel improvement why is it that we repeatedly see an annoyed indifference to this basic request from law enforcement. Leave the duty to notify alone.

OACP is a proponent of the Second Amendment, and a proponent for officer safety and safe communities. These concepts do not have to be exclusive of each other. The legality of regulating firearms laws is not in debate. All we ask is that you carefully consider the potential negative impact on our communities, our interactions, and our officers; and whether those impacts are acceptable in terms of the potential outcomes.

Thank you for considering our concerns