

Terry Johnson

State Senator

14th Senate District



Sponsor Testimony

Senate Bill 215

Ohio Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee

September 21, 2021

Chairman Hoagland, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee: Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 215.

This bill would establish permitless carry for qualifying adults in Ohio wherever concealed carry is currently permitted. Such adults are defined in the bill as those who are at least 21 years old and are not legally prohibited from possessing or receiving a firearm.

Senate Bill 215 also creates a process for a pretrial civil immunity if a person used force against another in self-defense, defense of another, or defense of that person's property. If the pretrial immunity hearing is ruled in favor of the defendant, that person claims immunity from liability for injury, death, or loss to another based on self-defense, defense of another, or defense of that person's property.

Additionally, this legislation eliminates the requirements for a person carrying a concealed firearm to disclose that possession to a law enforcement officer in the case of a traffic stop. It also eliminates the requirements for a concealed handgun licensee to carry their license while carrying a firearm.

I would also like to respectfully request that the committee review an amendment to Senate Bill 215, AM1717. This amendment would make clear that if a person does not prevail at a pretrial immunity hearing and the matter proceeds to trial, then the prosecution must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the person did not use force in self-defense, defense of another, or defense of that person's residence. This amendment will help strengthen the bill and I respectfully request that the committee accept this amendment.

As our founding fathers put forth in the Second Amendment of the United States Constitution: "A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." Our own Ohio Constitution's Bill of Rights also

puts forth this sentiment in Section 4: “The people have the right to bear arms for their defense and security; but standing armies, in time of peace, are dangerous to liberty, and shall not be kept up; and the military shall be in strict subordination to the civil power.”

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.