

PHANTOM FIREWORKS

Distributors of Phantom® and Wolf Pack® Brand Fireworks

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Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215
House Bill 172

Chairman Hoagland, Vice-Chairman Johnson, and members of the committee, I am Danial Peart, Director of Government Affairs for Phantom Fireworks. Phantom Fireworks was founded in Youngstown, OH in 1973. In our time, we've expanded into a leading national presence with retail outlets and offices stretching from California to Maine and Florida. We have significantly grown our Ohio operations over this time, including a 750,000 square foot warehouse in Warren, OH, as well as a new office building that remains in Youngstown. We employ over 500 Ohioans and we are proud to call the Buckeye state our home for the last 46 years. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 172.

Nearly identical iterations of this proposal have been deliberated in the legislature since 2014, when former Senator Burke first tackled the process of addressing Ohio's antiquated fireworks laws. Currently, Ohio is on an island with only Massachusetts as the two states which don't permit any level of consumer fireworks use. Every one of the other 48 states are light years ahead of us in their attitude towards responsible consumer fireworks use, and their willingness to trust their citizens to make responsible decisions for themselves. It's time to stop making Ohioans criminals for simply celebrating our great country's independence.

In recent weeks, we have been actively engaged in good faith discussions with the bill sponsors and the Department of Commerce to come up with the consensus document before you today. Every one of us wanted something more, but today's amendments represent a common ground. I'd like to personally thank all involved for their hard work and efforts.

As I've done before, I ask you to vote "yes" on HB 172, and allow Ohioans to embrace the same, basic, freedoms already enjoyed throughout 98% of the country. Thank you for your time and I'm happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Danial Peart, Director of Government Affairs