

Committees

Vice Chair Criminal Justice,
Higher Education, Primary and
Secondary Education, Economic
and Workforce Development



State Representative Joshua E. Williams
Ohio House of Representatives

Good afternoon, Chairwoman Abrams, Ranking Member Brown, and esteemed members of the Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 690 today.

HB 690 aims to increase the penalty for repeat acts of voyeurism and thereby keep our communities safer from predatory actors. Voyeurism is defined as the criminal act of secretly viewing another person without their consent in a setting where they have a reasonable expectation of privacy. Additionally, the use of devices like cameras for this purpose is considered an act of voyeurism.

Currently, under Section 2907.08 of the Ohio Revised Code, this action is considered a third-degree misdemeanor. There are no provisions that increase this penalty upon multiple infractions; therefore, an offender's sixth or seventh conviction would warrant the same punishment as their first. Through HB 690, we can amend Section 2907.08 to make third and subsequent violations of this prohibition third degree felonies.

Two or more convictions for a crime of this nature is indicative of a pattern of endangering and predatory behavior that is unlikely to cease without law enforcement intervention. By increasing the penalty for multiple convictions to a felony, we can help keep dangerous individuals off the streets and show that these types of behaviors are not tolerated in Ohio.

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Marty Worley, of Southwest Ohio, makes the case for this bill better than any arguments I could give. Earlier this year, 22-year-old Marty Worley, who had previously been convicted on voyeurism charges in Butler and Hamilton counties, was arrested again in July for secretly taking photos of women in a TJ Maxx. In each case, Worley was “sentenced to time in the county jail and then released”.¹ The father of one victim was quoted as saying “I knew he was going to do it again. They basically just smacked him on the hand.”² Under HB 690, it is unlikely that we will see the same kind of brazen behavior from predatory men like Mr. Worley. If a repeat offender like Mr. Worley does decide to offend for the third time, they will to be sentenced to a felony and time in prison, a consequence that will discourage further offenses.

I want to thank my co-sponsor, Representative Thomas, for his willingness to help tackle this issue and join other states like Florida in further penalizing these repeated acts of voyeurism.

Thank you again Chairwoman Abrams, Ranking Member Brown, and members of the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today and I welcome any questions you may have.

¹ <https://www.wlwt.com/article/marty-worley-shopping-voyeurism-charges-west-chester/61548848>

² <https://www.wlwt.com/article/marty-worley-shopping-voyeurism-charges-west-chester/61548848>