

To: Chairman Peterson and the members of the Government oversight committee

In support of HB 51 here is my testimony. I have been a resident of the state of Ohio since I was a boy, moving here with my parents in 1967. My Family tree includes 12 Veterans that served this country beginning with the Revolutionary war, then the Civil war, Spanish American War, World War II (Medal of Honor Recipient), Korea, Iraq, and Afghanistan all with distinction and honor. My Dad taught me about firearms and the responsibility that goes along with it. He also taught me that firearms put food on the table, protected you when in harm's way and was an American's right.

When I was 8 years old, in 1970, Dad took me to the local Montgomery Ward's to buy my first 22 rifle. Dad thought I was old enough and I paid for it with my allowance, it was \$5 dollars. This was my first experience exercising my second amendment right to bear arms; I was a child. The Gun itself was a used and had the barrel sawed off flush at the forward grip. By today's standards, the gun is illegal and I would be charged as a felon for owning it, not to mention the retailer would be blacklisted or closed down for selling a gun like this. There was no paperwork, no questions asked, no background check, no record of purchase beyond the receipt from the store. Totally legal at the time and I had many years of service from that now illegal rifle. It has since been physically destroyed for the fact that nowadays it is a felony to have a short barreled rifle 9 inches.

52 years later I bought a double barrel shotgun. To make the purchase, I had to get a background check, prove that I was a resident and sign a sworn statement that I was not giving or buying this firearm for another person. I also learned that my background check to purchase this firearm will kept on file for 20 years by the retailer, then the file is turned over to the Federal Government at that time; Why? I have no criminal history. I have never broken a law beyond one speeding ticket in 1998. I have been employed since I was 14 years old and I have paid my Tax dollars on time every year. I served my country honorably in a war. I have proved that I am not a Felon or do not have criminal tendencies. Why do we need to keep a record of me when I don't have a record? Do I have a right to privacy? Does this sound like the Federal Government supports my right to buying a Firearm? They claim this is needed in the name of public safety. What is public safety and why am I considered a threat to it? As a guy who has a strong moral code and respects the laws and his fellow man how can I believe this country is for its people? We are heading down a path that needs to be altered or the whole constitution will crumble.

The answer is simple, the Federal Government is promoting a parties agenda by overreaching, over regulating, over controlling with little regard to the constitutional right of its citizens. It is also granting me permission to have a constitutional right, this is a very big problem. Protecting one right is as important as protecting all rights. I support the H.B. 51 to preserving the right to bear arms, not only as a citizen and patriot to Ohio, but to the United States of America, one nation under God. The Declaration of independence has a statement that gets to the point of the matter...

That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

Theodore Shearer

4466 Deerfield Ave. NW

North Lawrence Ohio 44666

