



**Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police
House Bill 51 – Opponent Testimony
House Government Oversight Committee**

Chairman Peterson, Vice Chairman Thomas, Ranking Member Forhan, and members of the House Government Oversight Committee, my name is Heinz von Eckartsberg. I am the retired Chief of Police in Dublin, Ohio and formerly the assistant superintendent of the Ohio BCI. I am here representing the membership of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police. We appreciate the opportunity to come before you today to provide opponent testimony on House Bill 51, the Second Amendment Preservation Act.

Clearly, this is a complex bill, with some controversial parts. From our point of view, however, there are two sections in particular in this legislation that are problematic for our membership. They are as follows:

- It appears that the bill, in its current form, would prohibit law enforcement in Ohio from utilizing the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) forensic tool. While we are not opposed to prohibiting the general “registration and tracking” of firearms, the wording in this bill would seem to prohibit Ohio law enforcement from using this forensic tool to tie the use of certain firearms used in violent crimes to suspects of those crimes. NIBIN is used only for criminal investigations and does not capture or store ballistic information acquired at the point of manufacture, importation, or sale. Currently, the NIBIN network is a key tool used by law enforcement to help identify shooting suspects who have committed violent crimes. It does this by comparing markings on cartridges from crime scenes with a database of cartridges that have previously been used in violent crimes. If the use of this tool is taken away, law enforcement will be at a distinct disadvantage when trying to identify violent criminal suspects.
- This same section of the proposed legislation would appear to also prohibit the use of the eTrace network by law enforcement in Ohio. This forensic tool allows Ohio police officers to quickly track down violent crime suspects who have used a firearm in the past to commit a crime. Users of the system can search the eTrace database of crime guns using the weapon’s serial number, type of crime, date of recovery of the weapon and the names of suspects involved. Again, as with the NIBIN Network, eTrace only is used to search for suspects who have used guns in gun crimes.

The membership of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police is primarily concerned with keeping Ohioans safe and reducing and solving crime. We are asking that you consider modifying the wording in this bill so that it will not take away two key tools that law enforcement currently uses to accomplish this mission.

Thank you for your time, and for the opportunity to share testimony on behalf of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.