



Buckeye Firearms Association

Memo

To: House Insurance Committee

From: Rob Sexton, Legislative Affairs Director, Buckeye Firearms Association

Date: June 6, 2023

Re: Support for SB 58

Mr. Chairman, members of the House Insurance Committee, I am here on behalf of Buckeye Firearms Association in favor of Senate Bill 58. Opponents of our Second Amendment rights are an inventive lot, continually seeking ways to get around constitutional protections to prohibit or restrict firearms possession and ownership. This has surely been the case with the current illegal actions taken by the city of Columbus to restrict Constitutionally protected firearms rights.

But while some opponents of firearms rights seek to outright ban differing types of firearms and equipment, others take a more insidious approach by usurping our rights through government intervention such as attempts to levy taxes on individual rounds of ammunition.

A more recent example of this type of work has been efforts to pass laws in California, Connecticut, and New York to require anyone who possesses a firearm to purchase special liability insurance. They don't seek to ban firearms outright, but rather raise the cost for owning one, thereby denying self defense rights to those with less financial means and make gun ownership subject to insurance underwriting decisions. It is not clear whether insurance companies would even offer such a product. And finally, as is too often the case with gun control activists, this type of requirement transfers the penalty for violence from the criminal to the law abiding, making people who simply want to protect their families and loved ones, foot the bill for those who wouldn't buy this insurance product, if it was available.

This type of requirement would seem to be blatantly unconstitutional both federally and here in Ohio. But as we have seen recently, activist courts often warp constitutional protections.

Understanding the nature of activist courts and these backdoor attempts to steal Second Amendment rights to protect ourselves allows the Ohio General Assembly to get ahead of these efforts and bar the door against them. Senate Bill 58 takes a proactive approach to this attack and simply spells out that gun owners in Ohio cannot be required to purchase liability insurance as a condition of possessing or purchasing a firearm. Senate Bill 58 builds a defense of firearms rights before they are infringed. Seeing the bad examples in other states and even here in Ohio where our big cities openly defy the law to infringe on the rights of people to protect themselves should compel legislators to prevent this type of attack from ever happening here. That is exactly what this bill does.

BFA greatly appreciates Senators Johnson and Gavarone for authoring this important legislation, and we encourage this committee to approve it at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your time.