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Sponsor Testimony
Senate Bill 148
Ohio Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee
October 10, 2023

Chairman Hoagland, Vice Chair Wilson, and members of the Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 148.

SB 148 was drafted in response to the actions of the International Organization for Standardization, which approved a new merchant code identifying purchases at firearm retailers September of 2022. Since the code's approval, credit card companies have been pressured by politicians and activists to adopt it.

If adopted, this merchant code would allow credit card companies to track lawful firearm purchases across the country, violating the privacy of customers and threatening the Constitutionally protected Second Amendment rights of Americans. The end result would be, by the admission of proponents like the New York Times, identifying "suspicious purchases" of firearms and ammunition, blocking those purchases, and even notifying law enforcement and the FBI of the purchase.

My bill would protect both firearm retailers and owners from financial discrimination by prohibiting a financial institution from requiring the use of a firearms code, declining a lawful transaction involving a firearms retailer based solely on whether the transaction is assigned a firearms code, or disclosing financial records. It also prohibits any governmental entity from keeping a list or registry of firearms or firearm owners.

Passing this legislation would bring Ohio in line with seven other states, most recently Texas, that have passed similar bills to protect the financial privacy of law-abiding gun owners and retailers.

Thank you again for your time and attention. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.