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Ohio House Judiciary Committee
77 S. High St, 11th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Thomas and members of the Committee,

I write to you today in support of House Bill 5, the Repeat Offender Act, which would increase the penalties across the board for violent and repeat offenders for possessing a weapon “under disability.”

Ohio’s “weapons under disability” statute is one that has warranted an update since it came into existence many years ago. Currently, an offender must first be found guilty of a qualifying offense by a judge or jury of his peers prior to losing his right to own a firearm. They then get to commit a second offense before facing a felony of the third degree. They can continue to accumulate these charges until push comes to shove, and a judge finally puts the repeat violent offender behind bars.

Under House Bill 5, prosecutors and judges will be given additional tools to accompany an escalation in the criminal penalty for offenders who continue to defy the law and illegally possess a firearm. Violent crime has long plagued our metropolitan hubs and it is time for law and order to take them back.

I have been a strong supporter of the Second Amendment and have done everything in my power to defend it from intrusion at the state and federal level. Advocates have long talked about the proverbial “good guy with a gun” situation versus a “bad guy with a gun” situation. This bill is all about going after the bad guy with the gun who shouldn’t even be able to have one in the first place. I encourage my fellow supporters of the Second Amendment to assist in ushering this legislation across the finish line.

It is a matter of utmost urgency that we move House Bill 5 swiftly through the legislative process to keep our communities safe.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dave Yost".

Dave Yost
Ohio Attorney General