



April 1, 2025

Testimony on House Bill 5

Dear Chairman Thomas, Vice Chair Mathews, Ranking Member Isaacsohn, and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

On behalf of the City of Cincinnati, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to write to you as an interested party, and specifically provide comments to House Bill 5 (HB 5).

Gun violence continues to be a significant public safety issue in communities across Ohio, including the City of Cincinnati. It is appreciated that the bill sponsors seek to deter illegal possession of firearms and reduce recidivism rates through research-based approaches, as shared by Representative Williams in his sponsor testimony. We believe HB 5 is a further opportunity to demonstrate that Ohio's cities and the Ohio Legislature can have agreement on legislation that has a meaningful impact on gun crime, while not threatening the rights of law-abiding gun owners.

Based on our review of H B 5, we believe there are certain proposed measures that will inadvertently make firearm access easier for repeat offenders and will create loopholes to existing terms, specifications, and penalties. A few of these measures are identified below, with the goal of continuing dialogue with the sponsors and the House Judiciary Committee to achieve public safety legislation that, upon implementation, has the desired effect of reducing and deterring further gun violence.

While HB 5 appears to provide an increase to automatic firearms specifications, those increases are limited and only apply to offenders displaying, brandishing, or using automatic firearm devices to commit the offense. In fact, the same provision of HB 5 eliminates existing specifications for offenders in possession of components such as mufflers, suppressors, or even Glock switches - which is a major concern. Existing specifications for offenders carrying these dangerous devices should not be diminished.

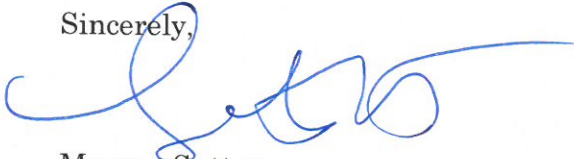
In addition, HB 5 proposes lower base-level penalties for most Weapon Under Disability (WUD) felony offenses; a position that directly conflicts with the approach of leveraging elevated penalties to deter such crime. Notably, HB 5 expands firearms access to certain categories of prohibited individuals. Specifically, this means individuals currently under

federal disability for prior misdemeanor domestic violence convictions would have their access to firearms restored.

The City of Cincinnati and Cincinnati Police Department are key stakeholders with a vested interest in achieving public safety with the Ohio Legislature. As the House Judiciary Committee continues its deliberations on HB 5, we stand ready to offer any information and engage in discussion of our experiences that will aid in your consideration.

We are committed to reducing the number of guns in the hands of individuals previously convicted of serious crimes, and we appreciate the steps this body is taking to develop thoughtful legislation to address this threat to our communities.

Sincerely,



Morgan Sutter
Office of the City Manager, City of Cincinnati
Director of Grant Administration & Government Affairs

Cc: Chief Teresa A. Theetge, City of Cincinnati Police Department