



**Phil Plummer**  
**State Representative**

Sponsor Testimony – House Bill 487

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Chairman Thomas, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Synenberg, and members of the Judiciary committee, thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on House Bill 487.

Before serving in the Ohio House, I spent decades in law enforcement, including as Sheriff of Montgomery County. During that time, I saw firsthand how repeat drug trafficking fuels violent crime, devastates families, and overwhelms our justice system. House Bill 487 is informed directly by that experience.

This legislation creates a repeat drug offender specification for individuals who are convicted of felony drug trafficking and who have already been convicted of two or more prior felony trafficking offenses. In plain terms, this bill is aimed at the small but dangerous group of offenders who repeatedly choose to profit from pushing illegal drugs into our communities despite prior convictions and opportunities to change course.

HB 487 does not target addiction. It does not increase penalties for simple possession. Instead, it focuses squarely on repeat traffickers, particularly those dealing substances like fentanyl that are driving overdose deaths across Ohio. These are individuals who have demonstrated, through repeated felony conduct, that prior sanctions were not sufficient to protect the public.

The bill gives prosecutors the ability to seek an additional sentencing specification and gives judges another tool at sentencing, while still preserving judicial discretion. It aligns drug trafficking penalties more closely with how Ohio already treats repeat violent offenders, recognizing that habitual trafficking is not a victimless crime and often goes hand-in-hand with firearms, organized crime, and violence.

As Sheriff, I attended overdose scenes and met with families whose lives were permanently changed by drug trafficking. I also worked with treatment providers and diversion programs, and I believe strongly in treatment where it is appropriate. But accountability matters, and public safety demands that we address repeat offenders who refuse to stop.

House Bill 487 strikes that balance. It is targeted, measured, and focused on those who repeatedly endanger our communities for profit. I respectfully ask for your consideration and support of this legislation.

Thank you, and I am happy to answer any questions.