

Proponent Testimony for House Bill 23

To Enact Section 5502.54 of the Revised Code to Create the Escaped Convict Alert Program

Good morning, Chair Abrams, Vice Chair Miller, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the House Public Safety Committee.

My name is Shane Barker, and I bring 31 years of law enforcement experience to you today. After serving 25 years as a Captain with the Summit County Sheriff's Department, I retired and currently serve as a Special Deputy for Portage County. Throughout my career, I've seen firsthand the importance of having the right tools to keep our communities safe. This bill is one of those critical tools.

With my experience, I know the requirements to keep our citizens safe, and the creation of the escaped convict alert program (ECAP) will enhance the ability of law enforcement to quickly and effectively communicate when a convicted felon escapes. Summit County, in particular, has had numerous incidents of escaped convicts from local correctional facilities. These situations put our communities at great risk, and this bill significantly enhances notifications, as the Ohio State Highway Patrol and other local Law Enforcement Agencies confirmed that they were not notified.

ECAP will allow law enforcement agencies to activate alerts for escaped felons, warning the public and facilitating coordination across jurisdictions. As a long-term law enforcement professional, I can tell you that having immediate access to such information can make the difference between a quick resolution and prolonged danger to our citizens. This bill is an important step toward making Ohio a safer place for all residents.

I urge you to support this legislation.

Sincerely, Shane Barker ShaneCFI@gmail.com 330-608-0156