

Chairwoman Abrams, Vice Chair Miller, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Public Safety Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony in support of the FIND Act, House Bill 217, sponsored by Representatives Christine Cockley and Kevin Ritter.

My journey into advocacy for missing persons began in 2006, when I saw a local news story about Brian Shaffer, a 27-year-old man who vanished after a night out with friends. Like many Ohioans, I was heartbroken—and then I became determined to help. Since that day, I have spent the past 19 years working with and supporting hundreds of families searching for missing loved ones. What I have seen firsthand is deeply troubling: Ohio lacks consistency, transparency, and urgency in the way missing persons cases are handled.

Families are often left to navigate a fragmented system on their own. Too many have reported feeling ignored by law enforcement, treated not as victims needing support but as nuisances. Some police departments are responsive, but others delay action or fail to enter cases into national databases. The system is inconsistent, and this inconsistency costs lives and prolongs suffering.

One of the most critical challenges is the lack of centralized, up-to-date, and publicly accessible information. As of May 30, 2025, here are the discrepancies among missing persons databases:

- **Ohio Attorney General's Missing Persons Website**
 - 346 missing adults
 - 837 missing children
- **NAMUS (National Missing and Unidentified Persons System)**
 - 383 missing adults
 - 57 missing children
- **National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)**
 - 121 missing children

These numbers should match—but they don't. If families, law enforcement, and the public don't know where to find the most accurate information, how can we expect to bring missing people home?

That's why I am grateful for the FIND Act/HB 217. Requiring all missing persons cases in Ohio to be entered into NAMUS within 30 days is a critical, commonsense step forward.

NAMUS is not just a database—it's a vital tool. It offers advanced technology, forensic and investigative support, and a Cold Case Advisory Team. These resources are especially important for smaller or under-resourced agencies.

Sixteen other states already mandate the use of NAMUS. Ohio should be next. By passing this bill, we will improve how cases are tracked, investigated, and ultimately solved. Most importantly, we will give families something they desperately need—**hope**.

On behalf of the families, I have walked alongside over the last 19 years—and for every Ohioan who may face this unimaginable nightmare in the future—I respectfully urge you to support the FIND Act/HB 217.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Lori Davis

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