

Institute for Legislative Action

11250 WAPLES MILL ROAD

FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22030



NRA

June 23, 2025

Chairman Johnson and Members of the Senate Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee,

My name is John Weber and I represent the National Rifle Association and our members in Ohio. The NRA supports Senate Bill 214, which removes firearm suppressors from the definition of dangerous ordnance in Ohio law, and thanks Senator Koehler for its introduction. This legislation is a forward-thinking step to align Ohio with potential federal reforms, such as the removal of suppressors from the National Firearms Act (NFA), while promoting the safety and rights of Ohioans.

Firearm suppressors, often incorrectly referred to as “silencers,” reduce the noise of a gunshot by 20-40 decibels. The term “silencer” and Hollywood portrayals have created a false narrative that suppressors are tools for illicit activity. They are safety accessories that reduce noise, benefiting users and ranges. This is particularly critical for hunters, sport shooters, and law enforcement personnel who face repeated exposure. Notably, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) recently purchased suppressors for its agents, explicitly citing the “health and safety” of personnel during mandatory firearms training. If suppressors are deemed essential for federal agents’ hearing protection, Ohioans deserve equal access to these devices for lawful activities.

In 2021 the ATF published its “Firearms Commerce in the United States” report which said over 2.6 million suppressors are legally registered nationwide. More recent data indicates this number has grown significantly. A Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request by the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) to the ATF revealed that from May 2021 to July 2024, an additional 2,193,123 suppressors were registered, bringing the total to approximately 4.86 million as of mid-2024. Many are owned by Ohio residents for hunting, target shooting, and home defense. The U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008) affirms Second Amendment protections for firearms and accessories in “common use” for lawful purposes. Suppressors meet this standard and removing them from Ohio’s dangerous ordnance list would recognize their widespread, responsible use while preserving constitutional protections.

Data from the ATF’s 2021 report shows that suppressors are rarely involved in criminal activity, with only a handful of cases, often involving homemade devices, not commercially manufactured ones. Their inclusion as dangerous ordnance is disproportionate to any public safety threat, as they do not enhance a firearm’s lethality.

In countries like New Zealand and much of Europe, suppressors are less regulated and even encouraged for noise reduction in shooting sports and hunting, benefiting both users and nearby communities. Ohio can adopt a modern, evidence-based approach by reclassifying suppressors.

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Under the NFA, Ohioans seeking suppressors face the NFA's financial and regulatory burdens. The dangerous ordnance designation in Ohio law adds complexity for law-abiding citizens. SB 214 would streamline state law, preparing for federal deregulation and easing access to safety tools for law abiding citizens.

Senate Bill 214 is a practical, safety-focused reform that protects Ohioans' hearing and Second Amendment rights. I respectfully urge the Committee to vote in favor of SB 214 and advance this critical legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.

John Weber
NRA-ILA State Director