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Chair Johnson, Vice-chair Wilson, Ranking Member Weinstein, and members of the Senate Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony for **Senate Bill 236**, which introduces the Suicide Self-Defense Act. This legislation is crucial in a time where the leading cause of gun death are self-injury for most demographics, and when 6 out of 10 gun-deaths as of 2023 were explicit suicide deaths.¹ Although the majority of suicide attempts do not result in death, the use of a gun in an attempt is lethal in 90% of cases.² As our nation has led all developed nations in our overall gun death for at least the last 10 years according to the International Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation,³ an essential way that we can cut down these numbers is by creating safety measures for those at higher-risk for a self-inflicted gun injury.

Senate Bill 236 has 5 primary provisions, which are:

1. The creation of a “Do Not Possess Firearms” registry,

which requires a person registering to turn over any firearms in the person’s possession to a law enforcement agency within 48 hours of registration and requires a law enforcement agency to maintain possession or transfer custody of a registrant’s firearm to the State Highway Patrol for the duration of the registration.

2. Certain prohibitions related to the registry,

which prohibits knowing inquiry into a person’s status on the Registry, other than to

¹ <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2025/03/05/what-the-data-says-about-gun-deaths-in-the-us/>, 2025

² <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/center-for-gun-violence-solutions/annual-gun-violence-data/#gun-violence-across-states>, 2023

³ <https://www.healthdata.org/news-events>, 2018

determine that person's eligibility to purchase, possess, or transport a firearm. As well as prohibiting knowingly giving false information or making a false statement with the purpose to enroll a person in or remove a person from the Registry. This bill also prohibits negligent failure to conduct a required background check, transferring a firearm to a person enrolled in the Registry.

3. Specifies that enrollment in the Do Not Possess Firearms Registry is a disqualification when applying for a concealed handgun license.
4. Exempts enrollment or removal records of the Do Not Possess Firearms Registry from the Public Records Law
5. Requires the State Medical Board and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to adopt rules encouraging licensees to inform the public about the Registry. Furthermore, it requires the Attorney General to implement and manage a public awareness campaign regarding the Registry.

Records related to this registry would all be maintained by the Ohio Attorney General's office. It is important to know that enrollment in this registry is 100% voluntary as is being removed from the registry. Upon the submission of a request to be removed, there is typically a 21-day waiting period, however this waiting period can be petitioned by the individual in the court of commonpleas. Once an individual is removed from the registry, all record of the person's previous enrollment is required to be destroyed within 24-hours of the Attorney General's office receiving notice of their removal.

This legislation is not intended to impede on any Ohioans right to bear arms, but instead to help individuals who recognize that they may be a danger to themselves or others be protected from one of the most final and lethal acts of violence that humans are capable of committing. I urge the committee to schedule proponent testimony for **SB 236**. This will not only allow for a thorough discussion of the bill's provisions but also provide an opportunity for the public to voice their support and concerns.