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**Committees:**  
Local Government  
Community Revitalization  
Veterans and Military Development

**HB 247 Sponsor Testimony  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
October 1, 2025**

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on House Bill 247, or Avery's Law.

On June 11, 2024, Avery Russell, just 11 at the time, was at a playdate in my district of Reynoldsburg doing what most 11-year-olds do; enjoying the summer sun and the outdoors, carefree with friends, as life should be for an 11-year-old child. In an instant, though, her and the Russell family's lives were forever changed.

Four pit bulls, two adults and two puppies, cornered Avery and began menacing her, barking and growling viciously. When Avery ran to the backyard, the dogs chased after her, attacking her and an adult on scene who tried to intervene. Two of the dogs then latched onto Avery and brutally mauled her, chewing off most of her ears, ripping into her nose, gouging above her left eye, and puncturing her forehead and shoulder.

The dogs were only subdued after the brave intervention of a neighbor, Zachary Ruff, who sprayed a power washer hose at the dogs to get them off Avery, and the quick actions of Reynoldsburg Police Officer Scott Manny, who fired off three shots at the dogs, killing one, which ended the attack.

Though Avery survived the attack, and the numerous facial reconstruction surgeries that followed, the physical, emotional, and mental scars of that day will last forever.

The dog laws as they are currently written in Ohio do not protect victims of dog attacks, like Avery, and do not hold dog owners, like the woman who owned the pit bulls that attacked Avery, properly accountable or liable in these tragic situations. The pit bulls in this case were unconfined, unrestrained, and had attacked before, unbeknownst to authorities because the owner refused to report the previous attack.

These reasons and more sustain why such substantive reform as that proposed in House Bill 247 is needed in Ohio. Thank you, again, for this opportunity. We look forward to working with the committee on this bill and will answer any questions you may have.