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Thank you, Chair Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks Hudson, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 225. My name is Sheila Nared, and I work with crime victims every day.

In Ohio, we have an address confidentiality program. Survivors of domestic violence, stalking, human trafficking, rape, or sexual battery are eligible to participate in the program and keep their addresses confidential.

However, victims of other types of violence also need to protect their addresses for their safety. It doesn't cover victims of gun violence or families of homicide victims. This leaves so many victims at risk. For example, I work with a mother whose son was killed in front of her house. We were able to get this family into safe housing. But then, just a few days later, their old neighbors who had been harassing them were able to find their new address, because they did not have address confidentiality. So the family knew their address was easily available to the perpetrator, who was still at large, as well.

When I became a victim of violence, I did not know the address confidentiality program even existed. I was constantly afraid that the perpetrator would return. I was afraid to leave my house. I only went to work, and I had to get people to travel with me to work to keep me safe. I was constantly trying to figure out new ways to travel to and from work that would keep me from danger. I even provided a different name when I met new people.

Like many people, when their address is not confidential, I tried to change my appearance, wore hats, and was in constant fear. Many of the families I work with deal with these same fears, and some even want to pull their kids out of school to keep them safe.

This type of fear just compounds the trauma that victims of violence experience.

I work with family after family who have had a loved one killed, and we move them to housing in a different area of the city to keep them safe. But because their address is not confidential, they live in constant fear that the perpetrator will find them.



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One woman that I worked with had a neighbor who killed her boyfriend. She and her children moved to try to get safety, but because their address was not confidential, the perpetrator came to the new home and kicked her door in when they weren't home, then a week later, he shot up her house while her daughter was at home.

These travesties need to stop.

This is why I support SB 225, which would expand the address confidentiality program to beyond just survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence to victims of gun violence and those who have lost a loved one to violence.

Sheila Nared

Crime Survivor Speak Cincinnati Chapter Coordinator and Director of the Seven Hills Neighborhood Houses Trauma Recovery Center