Unify.US

March 9, 2026

Dear Chairman Manning and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Thank you for allowing me to give testimony today and thank you to Chairman Manning for bringing this important piece of legislation.

I work for an organization called *Unify.US*. Created in 2025, Unify is a conservative organization that advocates for a variety of policy issues across the country that strengthen our economy, our families, and our communities. Unify is a merger of economic and faith driven conservatives: we were founded by former senior staff of the *American Conservative Union* (better known as "*CPAC*") and the *Faith & Freedom Coalition*. We believe that strong families create strong communities and that is why we are strong advocates for reforming public safety and our criminal justice system where we believe there are better solutions.

Today, we join our voices to the efforts to modernize Ohio's community supervision system by incentivizing hard work and successful rehabilitation. SB 291 represents a practical approach to community supervision that will make Ohio safer, stronger, and more prosperous. As such, we urge you to embrace this policy.

In 2021 I worked on a similar probation reform bill in the State of Georgia, Senate Bill 105. At that time Georgia had the highest in-the-nation per capita probation population of any state in the country. The bill created a pathway to termination for felony probation after 3 years if specific conditions were met. The bill was designed to reduce recidivism, encourage good behavior and rehabilitation, reduce the case load for probation officers and lower the overall costs for the state's community supervision program. The results so far have been effective. Since implementation in 2021, roughly 27,000 people have had their sentences reduced by an average of 3.3 years which has given the state a total estimated savings of $71 million that could be reallocated to active supervision or cases that may require more intensive case management. In cases where there was judicial approval for early probation termination the recidivism rate has been around 5%.

SB 291 was structured with some of the same goals in mind. This bill caps probation terms at three years for individuals on probation who remain in compliance with the conditions of their supervision, while completing key milestones that demonstrate personal responsibility, which in turn will correlate to lower risks of recidivism. Importantly, the bill gives judges the flexibility

to extend an individualized supervision plan if the probationer is not in compliance. This creates a process of accountability and matching community control time to meet the needs of public safety. SB 291 also allows those on probation who commit technical violations another pathway to settle their misconduct, rather than sending them back to prison where they cannot be at home with their families or continuing to further their career at their place of employment. These improvements will enable Ohio's probation officers to focus their time and resources on individuals who pose a higher risk, thus reducing caseloads and improving overall public safety.

In closing, we ask for your favorable consideration of SB 291 because the evidence is clear: when individuals secure steady employment, complete treatment, or earn educational and vocational credentials, their chances of reoffending drop profoundly. All of us should want those who are not a danger to society, who have served their time and who have paid their restitution to be able to transition back into society instead of getting stuck in what can become a never-ending cycle in the criminal justice system.

On behalf of *Unify.US*, thank you for your consideration of our views on this matter. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at: apipkin@unifyus.us or (770) 639-4140.

Respectfully Submitted,

Adam Pipkin
Political Director
Unify.US