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# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research  
and Drafting

Legislative Budget  
Office

S.B. 278  
136<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

## Bill Analysis

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**Version:** As Passed by the Senate

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Johnson

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### SUMMARY

- Expands the nature of damages an individual may seek against a municipal corporation, which enacts or enforces gun control measures, to include punitive or exemplary damages.

### DETAILED ANALYSIS

#### Regulation of arms prohibited

The bill expands the nature of damages an individual may seek against a municipal corporation, which enacts or enforces gun control measures, to include punitive or exemplary damages. Under current Ohio law, the state preempts, supersedes, and declares null and void any such ordinance, rule, regulation, resolution, practice or other action enacted or enforced by a political subdivision. A person, group, or entity adversely affected by any manner of ordinance, rule, regulation, resolution, practice, or other action enacted or enforced by a political subdivision in conflict the U.S. Constitution, Ohio Constitution, state law, or federal law, may bring a civil action against the political subdivision seeking damages from the political subdivision, declaratory relief, injunctive relief, or a combination of those remedies. The bill specifies that damages sought may include punitive or exemplary damages.<sup>1</sup>

#### Definition

The bill does not define punitive or exemplary damages. *Black's Law Dictionary* defines exemplary damages as follows:

Exemplary damages are damages on an increased scale, awarded to the plaintiff over and above what will barely

<sup>1</sup> R.C. 9.68.

compensate him for his property loss, where the wrong done to him was aggravated by circumstances of violence, oppression, malice, fraud, or wanton and wicked conduct on the part of the defendant, and are intended to solace the plaintiff for mental anguish, laceration of his feelings, shame, degradation, or other aggravations of the original wrong, or else to punish the defendant for his evil behavior or to make an example of him, for which reason they are also called “punitive” or “punitory” damages or “vindictive” damages . . .<sup>2</sup>

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## HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	10-07-25
Reported, S. Local Government	03-11-26
Passed Senate (24-9)	04-15-26

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<sup>2</sup> *Black’s Law Dictionary*, Revised Fourth Edition, pages 467-468.