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OHIOANS FOR CONCEALED CARRY
HOUSE STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE TESTIMONY ON HB 152
MAY 27, 2015

Chairman Maag, Ranking Member Gerberry and members of the House State Government Committee. My name is Doug Deeken and I am a Director of Ohioans for Concealed Carry (OFCC). I am here to testify in favor of HB 152.

OFCC has long sought many of the changes to concealed carry law that HB 152 addresses. OFCC fully supports HB 152.

HB 152 is what we like to call a, "Constitutional Carry Bill." This bill retains the current licensing system but makes it optional, mostly for the convenience of Ohioans who intend to travel to other states where reciprocity with Ohio's carry license is desirable. In many ways this will bring Ohio into line with the other Constitutional Carry States of Alaska, Arizona, Kansas, Vermont and Wyoming. When this committee hears opponent testimony at a later date I would encourage the members to ask themselves whether or not the doom and gloom heralded by opponents of this bill have come to pass in these five (5) states. As with virtually every other pro-gun bill there will be hyperbolic cries of, "Blood in the streets," which will never materialize after passage. These are the tired refrains of mentally exhausted elitists, easily defeated by serious minds looking for facts.

Furthermore, it is rather odd to me that we look so differently upon the rights protected by the US Constitution's Bill of Rights as the first and second amendments. None would dare say that training be required prior to being allowed to speak one's mind on civic matters, yet state mandated training is currently foisted upon us for exercising the second amendment. None would dare require a literacy test before being allowed to purchase a bible, yet we have such roadblocks today in order to be law abiding gun owners. Before anyone claims that guns are more dangerous than speech or religion I would encourage a casual reading of history. Certainly, we all desire that those who would choose to exercise their right to carry firearms for defense would get training just as we would want all of our fellow citizens to be literate. Indeed, I would inquire of opponents to this bill on the grounds of training whether or not they would favor adding basic firearms training to the mandatory curriculum to graduate from high school in Ohio. Somehow, I doubt they would consent.

This bill starts an excellent discussion about the whole question of whether or not we should require licensure of an enumerated right. I hope that this discussion is serious, deep and fruitful. We seek liberty for all and the full protection of our rights. To that end, we believe that less required government intervention is inherently positive.

Again, Chairman Maag and members of the House State Government Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.