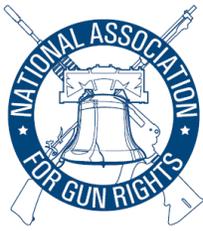


Testimony
of
Jeff Bailey
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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR GUN RIGHTS

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DEFENDING THE SECOND AMENDMENT
STANDING UP FOR FREEDOM

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address HB 152.

My name is Jeff Bailey, and I am a senior policy analyst with the National Association for Gun Rights, a member supported organization with nearly 100 thousand members in the State of Ohio.

House Bill 152 is a relatively simple, yet profoundly meaningful bill.

At the heart of the bill is the idea that rights are not subject to the whims of local municipalities, or even to the caprice of state legislatures.

By rendering the concealed carry permit optional within the state of Ohio, we will be joining the likes of Arizona, Arkansas, Alaska, Kansas, Wyoming and Vermont in recognizing citizens' rights to keep and bear arms extends beyond the home.

But we will also be recognizing another fundamental truth.

The choice to wear a garment over your weapon does not render the weapon any more dangerous, and should not be punishable under law.

Let's be clear.

Open carry is legal. The only thing that requires a permit is putting on a coat while you carry.

I for one do not want to have to choose on a cold winters' day between having the ability to protect myself or my family, and suffering hypothermia.

Right now, that is the choice Ohioans face each time the winter winds blow in from the north.

House Bill 152 is a very simple bill in concept.

It doesn't allow anyone to carry a weapon that cannot legally possess one.

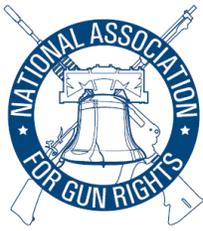
Criminals will not suddenly be able to legally carry a gun.

It does not allow guns to be carried in locations currently designated as gun free zones.

This bill does nothing more than restore law-abiding gun owners' ability to put on a coat while carrying their legally owned firearms.

Some will claim that without the background checks and training requirements included in the current permitting process that violence will abound, and that there will be no way of knowing whether someone with a gun knows how to use it.

Fortunately, these claims fall short.



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DEFENDING THE SECOND AMENDMENT STANDING UP FOR FREEDOM

The background checks involved in the permitting process are no more extensive than those employed when purchasing a firearm from a federal firearms licensee. The background check for the permit is redundant. Also, there is no other enumerated right for which a permit is required.

Those who claim that obtaining a valid government issued ID card in order to vote is too burdensome to those citizens who are already economically disadvantaged would insist that the exercise of the second amendment while clothed for inclement weather should be required to pay for not only a permit, but for expensive training as well. If this argument is not disingenuous, then it belies the duplicity of those making it.

Training is exceptionally important, and every responsible gun owner who respects the inherent power of a firearm seeks it out to know how to harness and bridle that power. But government mandated training has a perverse effect.

Just as an attorney is licensed as a result of being “minimally qualified to practice law,” a permit holder assumes that the training mandated by the government is sufficient for safe and effective use of a firearm. The problem that this assumption brings is that no single training course is sufficient for firearms proficiency, but when one has the government seal of approval, there is a false sense of sufficiency that is created. This false sense of security does not serve the public interest.

The other fallacy that is often proffered by those who are in the business of training, is that attendance at training courses will diminish as they are no longer required to secure one’s God given rights, even when wearing a coat. Experience shows us otherwise.

When Arizona eliminated their requirement for a concealed carry permit, they found a marked increase in the number of people who applied, in spite of the fact that they were still required to attend training in order to obtain their permit.

The economics of the situation make sense.

When the price of a firearm is decoupled from the price of training and permitting, each purchase is considered as a marginal purchase, rather than as a large purchase. Think of it as “rights on a payment plan,” which gives the psychological impression of a lowered barrier to entry. When the initial outlay is less, people are more inclined to enter the market. They then will seek out training on their own.

Crime has gone down in the states that have implemented constitutional carry. Training has gone up.

It’s time that Ohio join with those states mentioned before, and protect the natural rights of its citizens by passing constitutional carry and removing the restriction on what garment may be worn while exercising those rights.

Thank you for your time, and please vote yes on HB 152 without any amendments.