



COMMUNITY LIAISON UNIT

COLUMBUS DIVISION OF POLICE • STRATEGIC RESPONSE BUREAU

Senate Bill 201 Senate Civil Justice Committee October 7, 2015

Chairman Bacon, Vice Chair Oelslager, Ranking Member Skindell and members of the Senate Civil Justice committee. Thank you for allowing us to provide proponent testimony on Senate Bill 201, to expand Ohio's nuisance law to include acts of violence. We would also like to thank Senator Hughes for bringing this bill forward.

We have worked on nuisance abatement cases to include hotels, bars and after hour's clubs on the North side of Columbus. Many of these cases contain numerous acts of violence to include murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault. These crimes are currently not listed in ORC chapter 3767.01 as evidence to file a nuisance case and bring it before a judge for consideration. It is a sad day when the illegal purchase of alcohol can be used as evidence of a nuisance but someone shot on the premise cannot.

Property owners on many occasions have been very cooperative in remediating problems that would qualify as a nuisance. On other occasions property owners take a blind eye or even participate in the criminal activity. When a property is identified as a potential nuisance a certified letter is sent to the property owner/statutory agent and any management that we have identified. A copy of an actual (redacted) letter has been provided to you.

Properties are then investigated by undercover officers whom have to make drug buys, be solicited by prostitutes or make illegal purchases of alcohol in order to progress a nuisance case. These are very dangerous investigations when there are multiple shootings and stabbings that have occurred on these properties. On several occasions many of these problematic properties require someone to know you or that you have a special invitation to enter, leaving our undercover officers unable to get the elements needed.

These properties continue to have multiple violent acts committed in and on the premise and in many cases bullets travel through innocent residential houses and businesses. This activity then begins to wear away at the very fabric of a neighborhood which leads to a decline in legitimate business and finally the decay of the area.

Our community members ask for our help in stopping these dens of crime and currently we can do nothing to keep them from continued operation. With the addition of violence added to ORC 3767.01 we can work to get these places closed down when other means are impossible.

We have taken an oath to serve and protect and passage of SB 201 will give law enforcement the tools necessary to both serve and protect our citizens, businesses and guests of this state.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak today. We will now be happy to answer any questions that you may have for us.

Officer Scott Clinger #494
Officer Larry Geis #1570
Columbus Division of Police