



OHIO ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE, INC.

Sub H.B. 248
Written Testimony
Chief Bruce Pijanowski, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police

Chairman Becker, Vice Chair Stoltzfus, Ranking Member Miller and members of the House Federalism Committee. I am Bruce Pijanowski, the Chief of Police for the City of Delaware representing the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police. Thank you for the opportunity to express the concerns of Chiefs of Police across Ohio regarding the provisions contained in the amendments to HB 248.

As written, Sub HB 248 has a host of objectionable provisions. These objectionable amendments include, but are not limited to: the reduction of the minimum age to obtain a concealed carry permit, permissive language about carrying in currently prohibited locations, possession of firearms in liquor permit establishments, permitting CCW in school safety zones and courthouses, and removing the duty to notify during an encounter with police.

Law Enforcement leadership across this state has been working hard to improve the profession since even before the death of George Floyd. We have supported the efforts to create reform legislation and spoken repeatedly about the need to appropriate funding towards the law enforcement assistance fund, a budget item that has gone unfunded for 3 years that would provide the necessary and continuous training for our officers. It is once again disappointing that something that everyone expresses support for has been completely ignored.

Major metropolitan areas in the state, including the streets surrounding the Statehouse, are seeing a record number of homicides. It is unconscionable that these provisions would be considered when the ability for public debate is limited. At a time when our state is concurrently dealing with such issues as Covid prevention and recovery, law enforcement reform, school funding, and the HB 6 fallout, it is outrageous to us as an organization that the state legislature would prioritize firearms legislation that always generates heated debate at the expense of legislative initiatives that impact the health, wellbeing and financial security of every resident of the state. It is a political end run that is the exact opposite of what our representative democracy demands.

In closing, OACP would recommend that the legislature deal with the pressing matters that affect the wellbeing of all Ohioans. We advocate for a transparent, intentional conversation about any firearm legislation in the next General Assembly when there will be the ability to provide public input and when time is not pressing.