



March 24, 2022
House Bill 343
Proponent Testimony

Chairman LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland and Members of the House Criminal Justice Committee,

My name is Jessica Ryan and I write on behalf of Marsy's Law for Ohio. I write today to express my full support for House Bill 343. In November 2017, Ohio became the sixth state to pass Marsy's Law, with an overwhelming 82% of voters voting to strengthen and expand upon crime victims' state constitutional rights. It was supported by more than 375 elected officials, 16 county prosecutors, nearly two dozen county sheriffs, and state lawmakers from both sides of the aisle. As a result, crime victims in Ohio now have fully enforceable constitutional rights, including a right to be heard in public proceedings when their rights are implicated, a right to full and timely restitution, and a right to be informed of their rights.

House Bill 343 was introduced to give clarity to courts and other agencies tasked with enforcing Marsy's Law and also help to ensure uniformity in that process. It was a collaborative effort amongst a broad spectrum of local representatives, including representatives from the Ohio Crime Victim Justice Center, representatives from the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, the Ohio Judicial Conference, and the Department of Corrections Department of Youth Services, among others. House Bill 343's fundamental purpose is to verify Ohio's criminal code and the Ohio Constitution are aligned after the passing of the "Marsy's Law" amendment in 2017. House Bill 343, when implemented, would inform victims of their rights by requiring law enforcement to provide written notification of their constitutional rights at or near the time of initial contact with law enforcement. It also increases protections against victim identity disclosures and victim rights during court proceedings and legal discovery process, and documents copies for victims of crimes in court filings at no cost. Lastly, it requires notification to victims when the accused is released or escapes. I ask you to carefully consider this legislation and the effect it could have on the constitutionally protected rights of crime victims. I urge you to support HB 343 to help ensure victims of crime are able to understand and exercise their rights.

Sincerely,

Jessica Ryan
Communication Director
Marsy's Law for Ohio