

September 28, 2021

RE: HB243

Dear Chairman Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Sweeney, and Members of the Committee:

Knife Rights represents America's knife owners, collectors, manufacturers and makers.

We strongly support HB243.

HB243 is a very simple bill written to accomplish a basic goal; ensure that the citizens of Ohio are safe from a patchwork of knife laws that only serve to trap the unwary. A citizen should never have to worry about a police confrontation or arrest because they simply crossed from one local jurisdiction to another. Whether an office worker, factory worker, food service worker, hunter or fisherman, Ohioans should be confident that when they are carrying their perfectly legal pocket knife they will be free from concerns about the law when crossing a city or town line.

It is important to note here that based on data from other states (Ohio crime data is sparse in this regard), upwards of 80% of arrests for possession of a knife are of people of color. HB243 will help reduce interactions between the police and people of color which all too often have ended tragically.

After the passage and enactment of SB140 last session by this legislature, it only makes sense to follow up with a statute that ensures the law is consistently enforced throughout the state, serving both the citizens and law enforcement. HB243 will help eliminate "gotcha" encounters with police where a citizen is placed in serious jeopardy because the knife that is legal in their home city or town is illegal in another city or town where they decided to go to work, shop or visit a relative.

Over the past decade legislation similar to HB243 has been enacted in 12 states. Not just red states or blue states, but both! Why is this legislation so universally supported by members on both sides of the aisle? Because it makes sense that your constituents should expect consistency in the law. Not one of these states has moved to repeal similar legislation.

I urge you to support HB243 and support your constituents right to expect consistency in Ohio law.

Respectfully,



Todd Rathner
Knife Rights
Director of Legislative Affairs