

Good day Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair John, and Ranking Member Kelly.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of passing House Bill 62.

Line 146 of House Bill 62 reads:

(E) It shall be the duty of the courts and law enforcement agencies of this state to protect the rights of law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms within the borders of this state and to protect these rights from the infringements defined under this section. (line146)

The Legislature finds this language necessary. Why should it need to be said in 2021 that the judicial and executive branches have a duty to protect the rights of the law-abiding? Is this language not directed at juries all over Ohio? Is this not a commentary on where we are as a State and those who oppose this bill?

The General Assembly is exercising its proper role as a terror to evil by upholding the natural right recognized in Ohio's Constitution : *"The people have the right to bear arms for their defense and security..."* The General Assembly is correct to instruct the judicial and executive branches to legalize freedom once again in Ohio.

HB 62 doubles down by stripping any authority away from the enforcement of federal laws by the executive branch in Ohio in section (F) (line 151). Thank you to Representatives Loychik & Grendell, Rep. Craig Riedel, from the aptly named Defiance County, the co-sponsoring Representatives, and supporters of this bill, for leaving no doubt that every political subdivision and public officer therein *shall* uphold these especially important rights or be subject to multiple legal consequences, going so far as to eliminate the defense of qualified immunity. Who could be against civil government upholding the rights of the people?

The origins of gun control in America predate the civil war. Without offering a history lesson, I suggest "The Racist Origins of US Gun Control" by Steve Ekwall who highlights a series of "Black Codes" intended to keep segments of the population from the free exercise of their natural rights.

With HB 62, the General Assembly exercises the Doctrine of the Lesser Magistrate, instructing those in Ohio's executive branch to interpose themselves between federal overreach and the natural rights of Ohioans. The General Assembly has recognized the preexisting duty all Ohio political subdivisions and its public officers must uphold this critical set of human rights. Indeed, securing our natural rights is the primary function of civil government stated in the Declaration of Independence: *"...We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted*

among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,... “

This cannot be overstated: HB 62 implicitly recognizes the proper role of civil government - to secure individual rights, in this case the right to keep and bear arms. For decades databases, taxes, potential felony charges and all the subsequent damage therein have been threatened for merely exercising ones right to keep and bear arms. In the name of preserving "public safety", which is expressly not the role of civil government, law-abiding Ohioans have feared the misappropriated wrath of their public officials. HB 62 prioritizes the role of civil government as protector of Liberty over the false assertion that it can legislate criminality away. HB 62 insists that public officers punish criminals, not create them. HB 62 exemplifies the proper exercise of authority vested in the General Assembly, bringing clarity, unity, and a just solution to a long debated topic.

Those public officials who would oppose HB 62 should seek a different career path. This bill, were it to become law, will rely on freedom loving public officers to uphold the liberty of Ohioans by being a terror to evil, exposing corruption and tyranny wherever it has taken root. HB 62 insists that public officers uphold their oath regarding the right to keep and bear arms. Public testimony against one's own oath seems unwise, at best.

The sponsors and supporters of HB 62 should use these principles to tackle further issues being pressed by the federal authorities. Public officials should be explicitly instructed to uphold the rights of Ohioans on many matters, as they are in HB 62. May God bless the humility and courage of those willing to advocate HB 62's enactment.

Respectfully submitted

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