

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Proponent Testimony  
SB 182

Keith Mitchell  
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Chair Manning, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on SB 182 to reform bail. This issue is very important to me because I have had personal experience with Ohio's bail system, and know many people impacted by the system. One thing I've seen firsthand is how the current system punishes the poor. I've been locked up myself. Fortunately, I had the money to get out, but I know there are people that are stuck there with bonds for \$100 that can't get out. Either they can't get in contact with people or they just don't have the money and they'll sit there for months on end. In a lot of cases, you're trying to fight your case from inside, and you see somebody else that has a bigger charge but they'll get out because their pay rate is different than the other person. I've seen that firsthand. When I had the money to buy myself out, I saw others who couldn't buy themselves out. My case could be more serious than theirs, they just don't have the means necessary to get out. They'll be stuck up in there for months where somebody like me will get out. It's an unfair and unjust system based on money, not the seriousness of the crime or the danger to the public.

Another negative effect of the current bail system is how staying in jail pretrial makes it harder to fight your case and makes you more likely to plead guilty. It's hard to fight a case on the inside. When you're in jail, you're not focused on your case, you're simply just trying to survive. I've seen many people plead guilty just because the jail conditions are so messed up. They'll cop out to their cases to just get out of there. Even if they've got a chance to beat the case, maybe they have a 60-45% chance to beat the case, they won't, they don't care about that. They'll cop out just because they can get out of jail that day. We'll take any deal just to get out of jail.

I think there are issues with Ohio's current cash bail system. The people who don't have money stay in jail and suffer just because they don't have money. This bill would change this inequality, that is why I urge you to support SB 182. Thank you for allowing me to provide proponent testimony.

Keith Mitchell