

62<sup>nd</sup> House District

Warren County

Columbus Office

Vern Riffe Center

77 S. High Street

13th Floor

Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111



Committees

Chair of Health

Finance

Health and Human Services  
Subcommittee

**Scott Lipps**  
**State Representative**  
**Sponsor Testimony HB 105**

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Fedor, and the members of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on House Bill 105 also known as Erin's Law.

Unfortunately, these issue hits close to home for the people of my district. Recently, a teacher in Springboro was charged with 36 counts of gross sexual imposition involving 28 students all under the age of 13. Although only charged for 28 students, law enforcement believes that 88 students were involved. These students were assaulted by someone they believed was trustworthy and there are now 88 young lives that will be forever changed as a result.

Shortly after this incident, our office received a heart-wrenching email from a parent of one of the students in Springboro and I'd like to share an excerpt of it on their behalf:

"I knew to talk to my little girl about it very early on. I truly felt she understood. I've recently been reading about Erin's law. Someone can come in and teach children this early on, a professional, someone trained to know what and how manipulative child molesters are. Someone to teach them the things parents didn't think of, and then maybe there wouldn't have been 88 of them, maybe there would've been one or two before someone stood up and recognized that it was wrong. I need your help to get that to Ohio and into our school systems. Please consider adding this to your list of things to do. Our children need this, and as a parent, I am begging you."

To me, it seems as though we have 2 options: we can idly stand by as more and more children are sexually abused or we can put into place tried and true legislation that ensures that our future generations are properly equipped to handle the harsh realities of the world.

I would like for you all to consider this: if talking about child sexual abuse makes any of you in this room uncomfortable, consider how the child who is actually being victimized feels.

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Alone. Terrified. Completely and utterly helpless.

Imagine how that child feels not only during the abuse, but after. Survivors of childhood sexual abuse often feel as though the abuse was their fault as this is a common sentiment the abusers instill in their victims. We have a chance today to empower our children and protect them.

Survivors of child sexual abuse are more likely to experience later sexual abuse and have an increased chance of suicide. This vicious cycle can only end if we are able to find new ways of preventing it before it starts. As of June of this year, there are 37 states that have adopted Erin's Law. Joining them is an essential step in the right direction.

Once again, Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Fedor, and Members of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for allowing Representative Kelly and I to present sponsor testimony on HB105.

We would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.