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HB 64
House Committee on
Community and Family Advancement
Proponent Testimony
April 26, 2017

Chairman Ginter, Vice Chair Conditt, Ranking Member Boyd, and members of the Committee, I am the legislative liaison for the Office of the Ohio Public Defender. Thank you for allowing me to offer proponent testimony on HB 64.

Though we live in the world of constant technology with immediate internet access available at our fingertips, misidentification and mistaken identity still happen in our criminal justice system. We all know that updating State-based systems takes longer than the private sector, and often the software our local jurisdictions use is outdated or difficult to access. That added to the daily pressures which exist for law enforcement can create situations of mistaken identity and wrongful arrest.

Driver's licenses and other ID cards can mitigate the occurrence of mistaken identification, but it is not foolproof. There is a myriad of reasons that people don't have a driver's license, which helps law enforcement secure the right individual. Many cities across the country are offering identification cards to citizens, which is a step in the same direction that HB 64 is taking Ohio.

I formerly worked as a trial attorney where I experienced firsthand the devastation that arrest based on misidentification can cause a person. Aiding those individuals with an automatic court process is helpful, necessary, and the right thing to do.

HB 64 is a good start towards fixing a State error and preventing the destruction of mistaken identification and arrest. Please pass HB 64 to help fix the damage caused by misidentification arrests. I'm happy to take any questions at this time.