Chairman Bacon,

My name is Rena Passas. I grew up in Youngstown, Ohio and received my degrees from The Ohio State University and Capital University Law School. My background is in political science and security and intelligence.I am currently a resident of Hilliard, Ohio, and a criminal defense attorney here in Franklin County. I have been working in the criminal justice field for approximately six years now. I am strongly opposed to SB 67, otherwise known as Sierrah’s Law.

As a criminal attorney for a number of years, I can say firsthand that registries are not as effective on preventing crime and keeping the public safe as one may think. In fact, they are regularly more burdensome for all parties involved, including the State, than they are actually successful at preventing recidivism.

Registries have been proven to cost an exorbitant amount of money to set up and implement. States attempting to implement SORNA in its first year spent between $848,009 (Wyoming) and $59,287,816 (California). And those numbers are reflective of states already having the infrastructure for a sex registry system implemented. Nothing but the registry requirements changed for most of those states. *Statistics from the Justice Policy Institute 2009 study on SORNA.* Creating this violent offender registry, and allowing it to be monitored by the infrastructure already in place through the sex or arson registries, will have similar results. Millions will still likely have to be spent, even on the increase in monitoring resources alone.

States around the country, just like Ohio, are battling enormous prison overcrowding and financial burdens as a result. Creating another registry in Ohio would only intensify those problems. Registries prevent those who are forced to register from obtaining gainful employment and housing in many instances. This generally leads to instability for the offender, which in turn leads to violations of registry requirements, which then leads to a new criminal conviction, and potentially another term of incarceration. The cycle continues, even if that person will never go on to commit a new registry-eligible offense. If I could count the number of clients I have represented who have experienced this cycle, only to be placed back into the system solely for having difficulty complying with the registration requirements due to encumbrances placed upon them as a direct result of the registry itself, the number would be astonishing. Due to this proposed registry being incredibly broad in the types of offenses that could be eligible, the cost for the State for the number of offenders flooding the jails and prisons in Ohio for failing to properly comply with registry requirements, albeit never committing a new violent crime, could be overwhelming.

Further, registries do not actually keep anyone any safer. Statistical studies have shown that the recidivism rate of those who are required to register for an offense, and those who do not have that requirement, are relatively equal. *Source: Amanda Again, The Princeton Journal of Law & Economics: Sex Offender Registries: Fear without Function, 2011.* Why, then, spend millions to implement and enforce a registry that will likely show similar results? In a time when the focus directive from Governor Kasich to the criminal justice community is to attempt to find alternative routes of sentencing other than solely prison in order to cut spending on incarceration overcrowding, this Committee should not be voting in support of a proposal that would elicit an opposite result.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this irresponsible bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

I will now take any questions you may have.