

House Bill 230

Sponsor Testimony

Good morning Chairman Uecker, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs . Thank you for the opportunity to speak to HB 230, that will prohibit manufactured home park operators, condominium associations, neighborhood associations, and landlords from restricting the display of the “Thin Blue Line Flag”.

The need for this legislation was brought to my attention after Daniel Guthrie a constituent who is a retired Columbus police officer flew the “Thin Blue Line” American Flag and was told that he had to take it down. The “Thin Blue Line Flag” is used by law enforcement to commemorate fallen law enforcement officers, to show support for living law enforcement officers, and to symbolize the relationship of law enforcement with the community as protectors of fellow citizens. As a former police officer who served in the Columbus Police Department for 28 years, he wants to be able to pay tribute to officers that served and are serving communities in Ohio.

This bill simply modifies the current statute that states no park operator shall include any restriction in a rental agreement prohibiting an owner's display of certain specialized flags. This includes the display of the United States or the national league of families POW/MIA flag, the display of the state flag, and the display of the service flag approved by the United States secretary of defense for display in a window of the residence of a member of the immediate family of an individual serving in the armed forces of the United States. Just as military personnel have given up their lives to protect our freedom under the premise of the American flag and service flag, active and retired law enforcement personnel have done the same. These men and women deserve the right to fly with pride the “Thin Blue Line Flag”.

There was not a single opponent to this legislation and passed unanimously out of the House Economic Development, Commerce, and Labor Committee, and passed out of the House of Representatives 90-2. Mr. Chairman and members of

the committee, we ask for your favorable consideration of this legislation. We thank you for your time and would be happy to address any questions you may have at this time.