

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 4.9.19
Name: Barry Sheets
Are you representing: Yourself _____ Organization
Organization (If Applicable): Institute for Principled Policy
Position/Title: Executive Director
Address: PO Box 178
City: Gettysburg State: OH Zip: 45631
Best Contact Telephone: 614-969-5293 Email: consult@principledconsult.com
Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes _____ No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB156

Specific Issue: Liability immunity for non-profit security

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent _____ Interested Party _____

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No _____

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 3 minutes

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

Support the bill.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.

Proponent Testimony—House Bill 156
Barry Sheets, Executive Director
Institute for Principled Policy
April 9, 2019
House Civil Justice Committee

Thank you, Chairman Hambley, Vice-chairman Patton, Ranking Member Brown and members of the House Civil Justice Committee, for allowing me the opportunity to offer testimony in support of Representative Tim Schaffer's House Bill 156.

During the last 20 years, there have tragically been a number of violent incidents which have occurred where perpetrators have targeted institutions and personnel who are presumed to be defenseless, such as at schools. What some may not realize is that there have been in that period over 20 violent incidents at houses of worship.

Names like Emanuel AME, Burnett Chapel, Tennessee Valley Unitarian, Overland Park Jewish Center, Tree of Life Synagogue, or the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin remind us that faith institutions and those they serve are at risk of being targets of mass violence. In response to that, many of these organizations have taken steps to institute security protocols to protect their members and guests.

House Bill 156 is intended to allow such institutions, as non-profit corporations, to be able to create and maintain security for their facilities and patrons and allow those individuals, whether officers, members, volunteers, or independent contractors who are allowed to carry a concealed weapon on the premises, to have civil liability immunity extended to them for their actions relative to providing such security if an incident requires them to return force on an assailant.

As an officer of a local church myself, I am charged with maintaining the peace and purity of the church spiritually, and have responsibility to ensure the physical safety of our members and guests while they worship at our facility. I appreciate Rep. Schaffer's efforts and support the passage of this added level of protection for those who are charged with protecting others from harm.

Thankfully, there have not been incidents of mass violence on a house of worship in Ohio, and with the provisions of HB 156 being enacted, I am firmly convinced that there won't be in the future.

Thank you for your kind attention to my comments, and I would be happy to take any questions of the committee.