

Testimony of Frederick V. LaMarr, Pastor: Family Missionary Baptist Church  
and  
President, Baptist Pastors' Conference of Columbus and Vicinity  
before the Ohio Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee  
in opposition to House Bill 674

Thank you Chair Hoagland, Vice Chair Schaffer and Ranking Member O'Brien for accepting this testimony in opposition to House Bill 674. I am Pastor F. V. LaMarr, of the Family Missionary Baptist Church here in Columbus, Ohio. I am representing the Baptist Pastors Conference of Columbus and Vicinity which makes up over 70 pastor of churches in Columbus and Vicinity we whole heartly stands in opposition to House Bill 674.

First and foremost we feel it should be determined by each community prospectively. Secondly we are oppose to this bill out of much concern for increased criminal activity around our church and communities on the Lord's Day of worship.

We understand this bill addresses Sunday liquor sales only, but for those of us representing urban areas, that is often the only day of peace and quiet. Many of the stores that do not have Sunday liquor sales are small corner stores in our communities that have issues only exacerbated by liquor sales that fuel drug activity.

People are free to purchase liquor on any of the six days leading up to Sunday and for that matter from anywhere else they choose on Sunday that are currently licensed to sell on Sundays where communities have approved them.

Our primary concern is that we as communities be allowed to continue to decide for ourselves on a case by case basis what we want versus being told what will be.

We speak for the seventy churches in Columbus and Vicinity that are a part of our organization. We are also supporting efforts underway across the state to mobilize our State Convention against House Bill 674 for the safety of our communities, protection of our values and the preservation of our right to determine these matters for ourselves through the currently existing ballot process.

We are not seeking to impose our moral perspective but to protect and respect the will of the people and let their will be the determining voice in this and other matters – not a sweeping decision of the legislature.

It is for these reasons we – the members of the Baptist Pastors Conference of Columbus and Vicinity – stand in opposition to the passage of House Bill 674 and its proposed sweeping changes.

Chair Hoagland, Vice Chair Schaffer and Ranking Member O'Brien - we respectfully ask that you hear our request.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our position on this bill.

Frederick V. LaMarr