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Senate Bill 147 Sponsor Testimony

Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Brenner and Ranking Member Maharath - thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for Senate Bill 147.

This crucial piece of legislation would establish the Ohio School Marshal Program and echoes many of the same points as the Governor's School Safety Plan. The School Marshals would also work hand in hand with the Governor's recently established Ohio School Safety Center.

SB 147 was created to ensure that the safety of Ohio's schools rests in the hands of individuals who wake up each morning with the mission: make Ohio's school safer. The School Marshal Program would work in conjunction with the Director of Public Safety to appoint a Chief School Marshal as well as 16 Regional School Marshals that would oversee the safety and security planning for school districts within their region.

Each School Marshal would be required to be either a licensed peace officer or a veteran of the United States Armed Forces and have completed any additional training requirements established by the Director or the Chief School Marshal to be considered for this program. School Marshals would also be required to complete an approved weapons training recertification on a quarterly basis.

We currently rely on educators and administrators to plan, coordinate, and conduct school safety procedures as well as required practice drills. SB 147 would take this burden off of school officials – *educators,* who were trained to provide a proper education – and put the responsibility of school safety tasks on the School Marshals. These individuals will have the appropriate background education and experience in order to assess, adapt and implement school safety plans

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and drills throughout the schools in their region. They will interface directly with multiple levels of law enforcement such as Department of Public Safety, Ohio Department of Homeland Security, State Highway Patrol, local law enforcement agencies, as well as other School Marshals across the state in order to have the most up-to-date information, possible.

The goal of SB 147 is to empower those currently in the school system such as administrators, teachers and School Resources Officers to best serve and protect their schools through continuity of training and making sure that a certified School Marshal heads their training.

I plan to introduce a sub bill that would also implement several changes to the current piece of legislation. Mainly, a Safe Keep option for the School Marshals. Working with local school officials and law enforcement, the School Marshal would keep up to date on potential threats, including those posed by students or minors throughout their region or neighboring regions. Should a potential threat come to light, either to harm themselves or others, the safe keep option would allow law enforcement officers to give the minor's family multiple options of securing deadly destructive devices (such as a firearm) within their home without having to remove the items or the minor from the household, as long as specified security measures are put into place.

With the implementation of the School Marshal Program, Ohio will have to ability to be a driving force for school safety and lead the way toward creating school environments where students and teachers can truly focus on their education, not school safety issues. With the creation of the School Marshal Program, we will be implementing a well-organized force multiplier that focuses solely on school safety. We will be making Ohio a safer place to educate our children.

Thank you – I would be happy to answer any questions, at this time.