

# Ohio House of Representatives



## State Representative Brian Lampton District 73

**HB 161 – Sponsor Testimony  
House Criminal Justice Committee  
17 March 2021**

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Chair LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 161, Jacob’s Law. Jacob’s Law will create a registry, which would include the basic information on individuals who have been convicted of crimes against children. This legislation unanimously passed the House Criminal Justice Committee and the House Finance Committee in the 133rd General Assembly. Unfortunately, this bill ran out of time last year and did not become law. While working with the Ohio Attorney General’s Office, we were able to remove the small appropriation originally in this bill. We will now be able to add persons, over the age of 18, who are convicted of “domestic violence” and “permitting child abuse” against a child, under the age of 14, to the violent offender database, without the need for an appropriation in this bill. This is the one change made to this legislation from the previous General Assembly.

Jacob’s Law would add these charges into the Violent Offender Database created through the 132nd General Assembly’s “Sierah’s Law”. Under this bill, anyone may go to their local county Sherriff’s office to run a check on someone entering the family dynamic to see not only convictions for violent offenses, but specifically crimes committed against children

A young boy, Jacob Barker, who was tragically killed in August of 2015 by Justin Payne, inspired this bill. Payne was previously convicted of endangering a child in 2011 after fracturing a baby’s skull, and breaking her ribs and ankle. Jacob’s birth mother was dating Payne at the time her son was killed. Neither she, Jacob’s father, nor the family, knew of Payne’s previous conviction. While even a single child’s death from child abuse is intolerable, these tragedies are far too common. We believe that a child abuse registry would help other families to avoid a similar tragedy. We can do this by giving individuals the ability to take proper precautions and verify the criminal record of those around our children. While some argue these registries do not decrease the rate of these crimes, I implore committee members to ask themselves whether parents should have every tool available to them to protect their children from abusers. By

saving even one child through the enactment of Jacob's Law, we honor Jacob Barker's life by preventing further tragedy.

Jacob's family has been instrumental in the creation of this bill, and I would like to offer my sincerest gratitude to Tammy Barker (Jacob's Grandmother) and the rest of the family for continuing the fight for Jacob. Their efforts to turn this horrible tragedy into a positive impact deserve to be commended. I have worked with the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services and the Ohio Attorney General's Office while redrafting this legislation. We are now confident this bill is ready to be signed into law. It is time to stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves.

Chair Lang, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Jacob's Law. I am happy to answer any questions committee members may have at this time.