



April 3, 2024

Dear Chair Abrams, Vice Chair Williams, Ranking Member Brown, and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this important effort. We are proud to support House Bill 196 and Ohio state leaders advancing this and other improvements to our public safety systems.

Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice, a flagship program of the Alliance for Safety and Justice, works to advance policies that help underserved crime victims and stop cycles of crime. We have nearly 200,000 crime victims members across the country, including over 13,000 in Ohio.

We hear over and over from our members that crime survivors want most is first to be safe and have the opportunity to heal, and second for what happened to them to never happen to anyone else. This means creating common sense public safety policy that is based on research and evidence. HB 196 will update Ohio's community control system to align with what the research says keeps communities safe.

First, HB 196 focuses community control resources when the public safety return is the highest. Giving people on supervision focused terms in which to complete all mandated programming and treatment makes them less likely to engage in crime in the future. This is paramount to us as victims of violent crime.

Second, HB 196 will allow community control terms to be flexible and individualized to make sure that people on supervision engage in necessary treatment and programming, and have the tools and resources they need to be successful when they are done. This will reduce recidivism and reoffending, making us and our communities safer.

Third, HB 196 will make better use of public safety spending. Right-sizing the community control system will allow our state's leaders to spend more resources on crime prevention and critical services for survivors of violence. We should be using more public safety resources to prevent victimization and give survivors the tools and support they need to recover from violence. This breaks cycles of crime, and offers hope and healing to people who survived violent crime.

In conclusion, HB 196 is a balanced bill that is based on research and evidence and will help communities across our state be safer places to live, work, and raise families. Thank you for your consideration of this bill today.

Aswad Thomas  
National Director  
Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice