

Opposition Testimony HB 272 From Joseph Blubaugh

Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony.

My name is Joseph Blubaugh and I am a resident of North Canton, a nice quiet town in Stark County. There are multiple use government buildings that contain a courtroom in my area. I strongly oppose HB 272.

HB 272 would make such buildings less safe. It would create an exception allowing people to carry firearms into government buildings where courtrooms are located, as long as court is not in session—a distinction that will make no difference to courtroom personnel, government employees and courthouse visitors who would be exposed to greater risk of becoming victims of gun violence.

This bill actually does not make life easier for gun owners who want to carry their guns, either. Courts are often required to quickly move into unplanned, unscheduled court sessions to address both criminal and civil matters, so gun owners may arrive at the building, thinking court is not in session and find that it is! Now the gun owner has to return to their car and lock up their gun. It is far easier, safer, and less confusing just to continue current law that clearly states-No Guns In Buildings with a Courtroom! Then security personnel don't have to deal with armed people arguing that the hearing was not scheduled in advance!

Angry shooters intent on misguided revenge will find it just as easy to shoot a judge, prosecutor, or court clerk in their office when court is not in session as in a courtroom that is in session.

Courthouses and other government buildings with or without courtrooms are generally well protected by law enforcement and security. Why do we need barely trained citizens carrying concealed firearms in such buildings?

All in all, this is bill will just make Ohio less safe. Vote NO on HB 272.

Respectfully,
Joseph Blubaugh