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An Open Letter to Ohio Legislators:

I am the President of Western Reserve Fish & Game Association in Niles, Ohio and I am Recording Secretary of the Trumbull County Federation of Sportsmen. I want to go on record as being opposed to HB 585.

The two organizations that I hold board positions on represent well over 1,200 dues paying members. If you include their families and spheres of influence that total grows to more than 4,500 NE Ohio law abiding citizens.

To me and the people I represent, HB 585 does nothing to prevent criminals from obtaining guns and then using them in illegal activities, HB 585 will only further burden local law enforcement with intrusive clerical responsibilities and put additional stress on already tight local government budgets with the creation of a uselessly inaccurate self reporting data base. Note that source point purchase records already exist for most legally bought firearms and that record is much more accurate.

Even more important, HB 585 allows for the violation of individuals' Fourth Amendment guarantees against secret hearings and possible direct seizure of private property with no clear due process. A person's Second Amendment rights could also be violated on confiscation initiated by nothing more than a property dispute, a jilted domestic partner's vengeance or inaccurate gossip.

HB 585 is nothing more than a paper knee jerk reaction to a deep series of real social problems. Mental health, lax record keeping and failures in established protocols should be addressed directly at administrative levels. Violating the constitutional and statutory rights of law abiding firearms owners is a serious matter that must be avoided in a free society. HB 585 dramatically impacts the civil liberties of Ohio citizens who lawfully engage in shooting sports and firearms collection.

We have already seen, in recent years, extreme scrutiny in the purchase of firearms and tightening regulations regarding private businesses interpretations of points regarding a right to carry concealed. And, to what positive effect; illegal obtaining and use of guns continue unabated. Regulating law abiding citizens in the exercise of their constitutional rights has had no visible positive impact on the violence epidemic.

This bill is a dangerous piece of legislation, born out of fear and political expedience. Its attempt to legislate “answers” is not fair, logical or based on fact. I and the people I represent respectfully and strongly ask that those who were elected to serve all of their constituents stand in opposition to HB 585. Violating the lawful freedom of citizens with a mask of false social protection is intolerable in this state and in this country.

Sincerely,

Dan Padula