



## **Representative Jarrod B. Martin**

*70<sup>th</sup> House District*

### **Sponsor Testimony House Bill 203**

Chairman Bolan, Ranking Member Evans, members of the Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to present sponsor testimony for House Bill 203, I would also like to thank Representative Bubp for his work and leadership on this bill.

House Bill 203 is a simple yet needed fix to Ohio's concealed carry law. Currently in Ohio, a citizen who possesses a concealed carry permit is prohibited from carrying in a restaurant that has a liquor license. As a concealed carry license holder it is perfectly legal for you to walk into a McDonalds, and order a cheeseburger and fries, however if you walk across the street into an Applebee's and order the exact same meal, you have just committed a felony.

House Bill 203 is also about bringing Ohio's law in from the fringes and in line with the 41 other states who currently allow concealed carry in restaurants with their liquor licenses. (Please see attached document). Note that *every* state around Ohio trusts their law abiding citizens to enjoy a burger and shake in a restaurant that also serves alcohol. My question to the members of this committee is: why can't Ohioans?

There is a very real example that is at the heart of House Bill 203. Unfortunately, the state of Tennessee had not changed their law in time to avoid this tragedy, a tragedy that very well could occur in our state because we lack the appropriate legislation. This past April, Benjamin Goeser and his wife, who is a concealed carry permit holder, were working as the karaoke DJ's for Jonny's Sports Bar in Nashville when a man named Hank Wise showed up.

Hank Wise had seen Mrs. Goeser before at other karaoke events and he was attracted to her. He had sent her messages through the internet. Messages that she found inappropriate and when he showed up that night, Mrs. Goeser let the manager know that he made her very uncomfortable. The manager asked him to leave. It was shortly after that when Hank Wise pulled out a .45 caliber pistol and opened fire on Benjamin, Mrs. Goeser's husband.

Mrs. Goeser is a concealed carry permit holder, but at that time Tennessee did not allow citizens to carry in restaurants with a liquor license. As a result, her gun was securely locked in her car. Mrs. Goeser had no choice but to stand by, defenseless, as she watched her husband being gunned down in cold blooded murder. Ben died at the scene.

There is no guarantee that if Mrs. Goeser had had her weapon with her that she would have been able to save her husband's life. But, she would have had more of a chance to do so than she did with her gun locked in her car.

House Bill 203 gives responsible citizens a choice that Mrs. Goeser did not have. It gives them the peace of mind in knowing that they possess a deterrent force and it allows our citizens the opportunity to protect themselves and potentially prevent cases of violence like what was encountered that night in Tennessee.

I ask you to carefully consider House Bill 203 and realize the importance of this measure to the safety and security of our law abiding citizens. Thank you again for the opportunity to give sponsor testimony on this very important piece of legislation.

## **Breakdown of States Allowing Concealed Carry in Restaurants That Serve Alcohol**

### **States Allowing Concealed Carry**

Alabama  
Alaska  
Arizona  
Arkansas  
California  
Colorado  
Connecticut  
Delaware  
Florida  
Georgia  
Hawaii  
Idaho  
Indiana  
Iowa  
Kansas  
Kentucky  
Maine  
Maryland  
Massachusetts  
Michigan  
Minnesota  
Mississippi  
Missouri  
Montana  
Nebraska  
Nevada  
New Hampshire  
New Jersey  
New York  
Oklahoma  
Oregon  
Pennsylvania  
Rhode Island  
South Dakota  
Tennessee  
Texas  
Utah  
Vermont  
Virginia  
Washington  
West Virginia  
Wyoming

### **States Prohibiting Concealed Carry**

Illinois  
Louisiana  
North Carolina  
North Dakota  
New Mexico  
***Ohio***  
South Carolina  
Wisconsin