

House Bill 209
Sponsor Testimony
Representative Anthony E. Core

House Criminal Justice Committee
Representative Bob Latta, Chairman

May 17, 2007

Chairman Latta, fellow members of the House Criminal Justice Committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on House Bill 209, which would include law enforcement among those that would be committing sexual battery if they have sexual contact with minors.

Many of you are aware of the horrific murder-suicide that took place in Logan County two years ago this month. In the early morning hours on the day of his high school graduation, Scott Moody took the lives of his mother, grandfather, grandmother, girlfriend, and a family friend, and then killed himself. He also shot his 15-year-old sister, Stacy, but she fortunately survived.

Many of you talked with me about these incidents, and expressed your sympathies for Stacy. I have passed along your concerns to Stacy and her father, Steve.

Recently, further shocking allegations have come to light. It has now been charged that a 37-year-old detective from the Logan County Sheriff's office befriended Stacy in the wake of the tragedy, and then began having sexual relations with her.

A review of Section 2907.03 of the Ohio Revised Code shows that if a teacher, coach, psychologist, or scout troop leader has sexual contact with a minor, that conduct is defined as sexual battery, a felony of the third degree. Those are all positions of trust, positions where one could exercise influence over a child. Law enforcement is not currently included in that category, and they should be.

House Bill 209 would include law enforcement among those that would be defined as sexual battery if they have sexual contact with minors. To quote the sheriff from one of the counties I represent, “Law enforcement must be beyond reproach. Even the possibility that a member of law enforcement might abuse the public’s trust by having sex with children cannot be tolerated.”

Once again, I appreciate the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on House Bill 209, and I would be happy to answer any questions.