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Ohio Chapter



OHIO
OSTEOPATHIC
ASSOCIATION



OHIO ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS

May 19th, 2022

State Fire Marshal Kevin Reardon
Division of the State fire Marshal
Ohio Department of Commerce
8895 E. Main St.
Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068
Submitted via OhioFireCode@com.state.oh.us

Re: Comments to Rule 1301:7-7-56 (Explosives and Fireworks)

Dear Marshal Reardon—

On behalf of the Ohio Fireworks Safety Coalition, a statewide organization with more than fifty members, we are writing today to offer comments on the proposed changes and additions to Rule 1301:7-7-56 (Explosives and Fireworks). We appreciate the time and effort that you and your team have contributed to this important rule package.

Our coalition strongly opposed the passage of House Bill 172 as we feel that fireworks discharge is inherently dangerous and should be left up to the professionals. Despite our efforts, HB 172 was enacted last year and paved the way for discharge of consumer fireworks beginning July 1st, 2022. HB 172 established the Ohio Fire Code Rule Recommendation Committee and we were grateful to see representatives from public health and safety organizations included.

Overall, the rule changes recommended by the committee along with the changes you have included create a strong safety framework for discharge of consumer fireworks. Many other states have seen increases in property damage and injuries following the legalization of discharge, and we remain concerned that Ohio will also see this trend after July 1st.

Given that nearly half of fireworks injuries are to innocent bystanders, and many injuries occur in children under age 18, we are very supportive of language in the draft rules that explicitly prohibits fireworks discharge by minors. Further, we appreciate the requirement that fireworks discharge generally occur 150 feet from spectators and structures, with additional separation distances required from multitenant buildings, hospitals, and military installations. We are also

supportive of the discharge time limits proposed in section 5626 of the rules as well as restrictions on the amount of 1.4g fireworks that can be stored in a residence.

While there is no truly safe way to discharge fireworks, we feel that the provisions laid out in Rule 1301:7-7-56 strike an appropriate balance between allowing consumer discharge and encouraging safety and awareness. We have no suggested changes and would encourage the rules to advance as presented. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Submitted on behalf of—

Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate
Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Ohio Osteopathic Association
Ohio Insurance Institute
Ohio Academy of Family Physicians
Academy of Medicine of Cleveland and Northeast Ohio