



**State Representative Thomas E. West
Sponsor Testimony (As Prepared) – House Bill 616**

West

Good Morning Chairman Blessing, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Clyde, and members of the Government Accountability and Oversight Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony this morning on House Bill 616, legislation that prohibits law enforcement officials or agencies from utilizing citation or arrest quotas.

I have had conversations with law enforcement officials who have also told me that arrest and ticket quotas are harmful; not only to the people they serve, but also harmful to the officers themselves. The informal and formal use of citation and arrest quotas in law enforcement hurts police morale and erodes public trust at a time when local law enforcement need to be building stronger ties with our communities, through increased transparency and accountability.

House Bill 616 would prohibit agencies from promoting, firing, transferring, or disciplining officers based on quotas. It also defines quotas as mandates that require police officers to issue a particular number of tickets or make a certain number of arrests within a specific time frame.

Additionally, it would require the Attorney General to create a form on the AG's website for the anonymous reporting of the use of quotas, which the AG must investigate within one year of receiving a report. The AG then has the authority to order an official or agency to stop using quotas.

The law enforcement officers that I have spoken to are in support of this bill. Our peace officers should be out in the community protecting our families and our children without having to focus on meeting unethical arrest or citation quotas in order to avoid facing punishment from their superiors. Additionally, the pressure to arrest a certain amount of people in the community or issue a certain amount of tickets can often result in peace officers disproportionately targeting poorer communities and communities of color.

If we can not only outlaw the use of quotas in law enforcement agencies, but also create an accessible procedure for which people can report the use of quotas anonymously, we can move forward in working with communities to gain public trust in law enforcement and consequentially allow our officers to remain safe as they serve the people of Ohio.

Thank you for allowing me to speak about HB 616. I'd be happy to take any questions the committee may have.