

# **BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

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## **Written Testimony of Chief of Police**

**Michael W. Tussey**

*Before the Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee*

*On House Bill 314-Legislation that would allow an income tax credit for police protective items.*

Thank you Chairman Anielski and all members of the Committee for giving me the opportunity to present my written testimony to you today on House Bill 314. **My name is Michael Tussey and I am the Chief of Police for the Village of Baltimore in Fairfield County, Ohio.** I have been a police officer serving in various assignments for forty years.

As the Chief of a small agency we struggle with funding and as such cannot supply most of the officer's equipment. Currently we issue a badge and Identification card, ammunition, and one shirt and one pair of pants. Our officer must pay out of pocket for the rest of the required equipment. This includes things such as firearm, holster, magazine pouch, handcuff case and handcuffs, shoes, hat, gun belt, and outer wear such as jackets and coats.

Our part time officers are paid \$13.00 per hour and of course our reserve officers receive no pay. Full time officers start around \$15.00 per hour. This change would be a financial relief to those officers who in many cases must spend as much as \$2000.00 to outfit themselves. This doesn't take into consideration the replacement cost of items due to wear or damage. In many cases officers will spend between \$500.00 and as much as \$1000.00 per year in maintenance and replacement items. In some cases officer will share things such as raingear and cold weather gear to defray costs.

Some high dollar items can cost as much as the initial upfront cost. A good quality ballistic vest can be as much as \$2000.00 and as a rule will only be certified for five years, and a quality firearm will cost in the area of \$450.00 to \$600.00 depending of the manufacturer and caliber.

These officers are dedicated and serve other Ohioans with pride. They work in every kind of weather and all hours of the day and night. I would ask that you consider this piece of legislation to not only help these officers but to show that our elected officials support and appreciate the duties and sacrifices they make to keep Ohio a safe and prosperous state.

Thank you for your time and attention. I hope that Chairman Anielski and the members of the committee will give this issue their consideration.