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The Village of Botkins

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Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Scherer, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Ways & Means Committee, my name is Randy Purdy and I am the Village Administrator for the Village of Botkins. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of HB 575.

We are here today to discuss a potential tax credit for volunteer firefighters, and I think it is important to highlight the courage and selfless service of the brave men and women. In my community we trust that our firefighters will be there to handle any situation that arises within our fire district. The men of the Botkins Fire Department have done so with distinction, maintaining terrific response times, minimizing loss of property and lives, and performing to the same standards as full time Departments. They do this voluntarily, with minimal compensation, and so much pride for their community. Our firefighters work full time jobs and volunteer their time to protect our community and we couldn't be prouder of the job they have done.

As you know communities throughout the state of Ohio, and across the Country, are facing rising costs in maintaining infrastructure, capital planning, and delivering the essential services that our residents depend upon. These costs prohibit municipalities such as Botkins from establishing full-time departments, and only allow for minimal compensation of the men and women we ask to protect us. Every member of the Botkins Fire Department goes above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that our community has the best fire protection possible. This often means working extra hours down at the fire department, going to intensive training, and for many of our officers working at the department long after a run to ensure that paperwork is completed correctly and equipment is maintained. The passage of this bill would provide our Fire Chiefs with an additional tool for recruiting new firefighters and maintaining the strength of their departments.

Chairman Schaffer, Vice-Chairman Scherer, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Ways & Means Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.