

## BROTHERS HELPING BROTHERS

2005 HIGH KNOLL DR, DAYTON, OHIO 45414



Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Scherer, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Ways & Means Committee,

I am Nick Magoteaux, the founder and co-executive director of the Ohio nonprofit Brothers Helping Brothers. Thank you for this opportunity to testify on HB 575. I originally brought this idea to Representative Keller after visiting with many volunteer firefighters throughout Ohio and the nation.

Ohio, just like the rest of the nation, is facing a volunteer crisis. My hope is that this bill, in a small way, will give people an incentive to volunteer in their community. Now I want to make this clear, is not the "cure all" for the issues facing volunteer firefighters in our state. However, I see this as a good starting point to making our communities stronger.

I strongly urge this committee and all members of the House to visit their local fire departments to listen to not only the fire chiefs, but also the front-line firefighters at these departments. Ohio is facing a potential firefighter shortage. Many departments rely on volunteer and part-time help to make ends meet, but this pool of people is getting smaller. Without intervention, our fire departments could be in deep trouble.

My nonprofit allows me to meet and visit with many firefighters and fire departments all over our state and the nation, delivering much needed equipment they can't afford. I can tell you that many of our departments are hurting for funding and personnel. I would hope that this bill would make an impact on this problem. Even further, I hope this bill will an impact on this committee and the members of the House. I hope that this bill will open your eyes to these problems our local fire agencies face, as many won't see them until it impacts them personally.

Thank you for your time and support of this bill and thank you again for this opportunity to speak before you about this vital piece of legislation. Now I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully,

Nick Magoteaux  
Founder ~ Co-Executive Director ~ President