

H.B. 69 Proponent Testimony - Jackson Township

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee.

I am Randy Little, Fire Chief for the Jackson Township Fire Department in Grove City, Ohio which employs nearly 100 firefighters and paramedics protecting a resident population in excess of 42,000.

Grove City, Ohio is located just south of Columbus in a rapidly developing suburban community. Our documentation proves increases in emergency runs every year for 20 years tracking increases in both resident population and commercial development. As the city grows, demands for our service grow. However, our revenues do not grow with these developments because of the TIFs.

In all fairness, our municipal partner, the City of Grove City, has only 6 TIF districts encompassing approximately 1,400 parcels. And in 2003, the City and Township negotiated a TIF reimbursement of \$2.5 million for the construction of a new Fire Station. However, those 6 TIFs are presently taking about \$1.1million/per year in funding that should be going to our Fire Levies.

But because of the TIF laws, the money that our residents voted for those Fire Levies is being diverted by the TIF to build streets, and utilities for more and more residents and businesses. While the city can collect income tax on the commercial businesses, the Township Fire Department is left with the obligation to provide services to residents and businesses that are not paying taxes for those services.

Without H.B. 69 our only recourse for funding is to go back to the residents seeking an increase in our tax levy to replace the taxes lost to the TIFs.

Your approval of H.B. 69 is about fairness, and gives us a seat at the table if and when the city wants to offer a TIF to a developer.

Thank you Chairman Eklund and thank you to the Senate Ways and Means Committee for listening to our concerns.