



DoD-State Liaison Office

**OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
(MILITARY COMMUNITY AND FAMILY POLICY)**

4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

Ohio House Bill 558

Testimony

by Jim Rickel

May 28, 2020

Chairman and committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide information on House Bill 558 sponsored by Representative Cindy Abrams. HB 558 ensures the reporting of child abuse to the appropriate military installation when the child is a military family member. This bill makes efforts to determine the military status of parents whose child are subject to abuse or neglect allegation, and to notify the department of defense family advocate program for appropriate action.

My name is Jim Rickel. Department of Defense (DoD) Central Region State Liaison, working for the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Military Community and Family Policy.

This is about reporting of child abuse to the Department of Defense Local Family Advocacy Program Representative when the child is a military family member. DoD will then ensure proper reporting and procedures are followed within Department of Defense and that resources are made available for the military child, parents and or guardian.

The Secretary of Defense is required by Section 1787 of Title 10 US Code to coordinate with civilian child welfare to obtain information on allegations of child abuse and neglect involving children in military families.

HB 558 will provide a uniformed law and state statute ensuring notification to the military installation when child abuse allegations have occurred. HB 558 will also ensure the chain of command is notified as well, and allows a family to seek the medical and counseling services through the military installation.

Over 70% of military families live off a military installation and in our communities.

Improving the Lives of Military Members and their Families



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The military services have investigative, intervention, and rehabilitative support resources that can assist the state child welfare system in addressing allegations of child abuse. Currently, 25 other states have passed similar legislation on this issue and other states are considering legislation for this issue.

We thank Representative Cindy Abrams for sponsoring this initiative and thank you for taking up this issue for consideration.

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