



WEATHERSFIELD TOWNSHIP POLICE

"Come Home to Weathersfield"

1451 Prospect Street

Mineral Ridge, Ohio 44440

Phone: (330) 652-6486 Fax: (330) 652-1717

Dispatch: (330) 675-2730 Emergency: 911

www.weathersfield.wix.com/wtpd

Chief Michael J. Naples, Jr.
Captain Kristopher W. Hodge.

June 1st, 2020

House Bill 539 Written Proponent Testimony: Chief Michael J. Naples Jr.

Chairman Lang, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the Criminal Justice Committee, I wanted to thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony regarding House Bill 539 (HB 539). I would also like to thank the HB 539's authors Representatives Ghanbari and Blair for their support of law enforcement in the great State of Ohio.

I have served as a law enforcement officer for more than 37 years; 3 years for Warren Township, Trumbull County, Ohio, and 7 years for the city of Girard, Ohio, and 27 years for Weathersfield Township, Trumbull County, Ohio. I understand the difficulty and challenges associated with traffic enforcement, especially the key differences that face Trumbull County.

The passage of this bill would ensure that township police departments have the authority to enforce the appropriate statutes and assist with the traveling public during their time of need after an accident or breakdown on the interstates.

I think it is worth noting that law enforcement officers in Ohio receive the same initial training and must comply with the annual continuing education and training requirements to retain their certification. Of course, this applies to all law enforcement agencies in Ohio regardless of the size of the department or the population of the community in which they provide service.

My community has a busy two mile stretch Interstate 80 (I80) that passes through our Township. In fact, this section of I80 was designated as the first Safety Corridor in the state by ODOT because of the high incidents of distracted driving and speeding that results in numerous accidents. Our fire department and EMS regularly respond to accidents on I80 and our officers are unable to respond and assist them unless the Ohio State Patrol (OSP) request mutual aid and even then it takes critical time for the mutual aid to be approved and requested by OSP. This results in an unsafe scene for our first responders. Our officers would be able to assist our first responders and motorist in need without delay if HB 539 is passed.

I would like to thank you once again for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony to your committee and if you have any questions, I am available by phone to respond.

Respectfully:


Michael J. Naples, Jr.
Chief of Police