

*Butler County Fire Chief's Association  
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<i>President</i>	<i>Vice President</i>	<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Treasurer</i>
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### **The Butler County Fire Chiefs' Association's Position Statement on Sheriff's Control Over County Emergency Management Agencies**

The Butler County Fire Chiefs' Association opposes any legislation that would allow a sheriff or fire chief to implement or be in a position of authority over the county emergency management program or be appointed to the position of county emergency management director as an additional function to their primary position. The function of a county EMA is to support all responders during an incident.

By placing the county EMA program with the sheriff, a responder is now placed in the position of being both a responder and supporting the response simultaneously. Not only does this create a conflict for the role of an EMA director, it is also contrary to emergency response best practices and NIMS, which has been adopted by Ohio. Counties that choose to operate with their county EMA under the sheriff run the potential of being out of compliance with NIMS and may no longer be eligible for federal funding and grants.

Additionally, the county EMA Director plays a key role in the distribution of grant funding. We are deeply concerned that these funds would be disproportionately distributed to law enforcement agencies, particularly sheriff's departments, rather than being distributed to responders and communities based on need. The sheriff faces a potential conflict of interest with respect to the distribution of grant funding.

The Butler County Fire Chiefs' Association supports the retention of a county emergency management program that reports to an executive board consisting of elected officials, appointed officials, and first responders from throughout the County. We firmly believe that this model best serves the citizens of Butler County and allows our county EMA to coordinate and manage all available resources during a disaster. The Association also believes that in these times of tight budgets and limited resources the chance of the EMA functions becoming a "secondary responsibility" to an agency can only limit its effectiveness as has been proven with other endeavors.

Our current Director has proven to be a strong leader. He has displayed his worth on several occasions and is serving the citizens of Butler County well. Director Haverkos has been instrumental in leading the county's All Hazards Incident Management Team which has received recognition from all over the country. Never before has there been the collaboration that exists between our local fire departments as it is now in our county. It is our hope that other responders in Butler County will embrace the course that has been set for the good of our citizens.

*Serving the communities of Butler County*

*College Corner, City of Fairfield, Fairfield Township, City of Hamilton, Hanover Township, Liberty Township, Madison Township, City of Middletown, Milford Township, Village of Millville, City of Monroe, Morgan Township, City of Oxford, Riley Township, Ross Township, Village of Seven Mile, St. Clair Township, City of Trenton, West Chester Township, Wayne Township*