October 21, 2019

The Honorable Thomas E. Brinkman, Chair
Insurance Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High Street, 11th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: HB 330 Firefighter Cancer Claims

Dear Chairman Brinkman:

On behalf of the Ohio Township Association (OTA), I am writing to express our support for House Bill 330, which would charge firefighter cancer claim compensation and benefits to the Bureau of Workers’ Compensation Surplus Fund Account within the State Insurance Fund rather than to a state fund employer’s experience.

Townships across Ohio value their first responders, including firefighters – many of whom serve as volunteers in our communities. The OTA appreciated the work that the bill sponsor and the General Assembly did on Senate Bill 27 that established this policy change and the subsequent changes thereafter.

The OTA’s fundamental concern has been the potential cost of these claims for townships. To give an example, one township in Ohio is facing two firefighter cancer claims and ran numbers on what its premiums are likely to be if the claims go through. The township is a member of a Group Rating Program and its individual premium is approximately $108,000 per year. If both claims are allowed, the township would be removed from Group and its projected individual premium would be $227,000 – an increase of 110 percent.

Simply put, townships may not be able to absorb the cost of these claims in their already tight budgets. By charging these claims to the Surplus Fund, many of these concerns are alleviated.

The OTA supports the updates in House Bill 330 and encourages your favorable consideration. Should you have any questions or concerns about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me or Marisa Myers, OTA Director of Governmental Affairs, at 614-863-0045.

Sincerely,

Matthew J. DeTemple
Executive Director

MJD:mm
cc: Rep. Thomas F. Patton