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Committees

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Good morning Chairman Brinkman, Vice chairman Antani, Ranking Member Boggs, and members of the House Insurance committee. Representative McClain and I appreciate this opportunity to address the committee on HB 445. HB 445 clarifies that modulating headlights for motorcycles meet federal standards, and if passed, the Ohio Revised code would read the same. This legislation also includes some minor technical language changes.

A motorcycle modulating headlight is an accessory device that oscillates the intensity of a motorcycle headlight between approximately 20% and 100% of full brightness. Headlight modulators include a light sensor that disables modulation when the ambient light level drops below a certain point. When this happens, the headlights burn steadily, which does not meet the definition of non-legal flashing lights.

State and local laws have not been fully updated to allow modulating headlights, which sometimes results in law enforcement confusion, leading to motorcyclists stopped by law enforcement. The idea for this legislation came to me when a constituent wrote my office. This individual carries a copy of the federal standard for modulating headlights as well as the manufacturer's certification of compliance with federal law for the headlights on his motorcycle. While this individual has been pulled over, he has never received any citations. State and local laws not being updated to reflect Federal laws create the possibility for a waste of time for both law enforcement and the motorcyclist.

In order to allow Ohio's motorcyclists to have safe, un-interrupted rides, the Ohio Revised Code should explicitly state that these types of headlights, in pursuance with 49 C.F.R. 571.108 are not prohibited on our roads and highways.

Chairman Brinkman, thank you for giving us time to discuss this legislation, and we would be happy to answer any questions the members of the committee may have.