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**Chief Mark Kidd**  
**Pleasant Valley Joint Fire District**  
**House Bill 17 Proponent Testimony**

Chairman Lipps, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Civil Justice Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on House Bill 17. My name is Mark Kidd and I am Chief of the Pleasant Valley Joint Fire District, and I also serve as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association. On behalf of my department, as well as the over 1,700 members of OFCA, I would like to voice our support of House Bill 17.

This legislation increases the homestead exemption for spouses of public service officers killed in the line of duty from \$25,000 to \$50,000. This means that \$50,000 of the family's home appraised value or cost would be exempted from property tax or the manufactured home tax.

Every day, thousands of first responders across our state wake up, kiss their families goodbye, and report to a job where they risk their lives by running toward danger. The unfortunate reality is, sometimes these brave individuals pay the ultimate sacrifice in their service to their communities.

While no amount of money can ever take away the heartbreak of losing a loved one, House Bill 17 goes a long way to reducing the burden that these families bare in the aftermath of a tragedy. By enhancing the homestead exemption for spouses, we are providing that family with and a greater piece of mind as they try to navigate the financial and administrative hardships that come with losing a partner, to say nothing of the emotional one.

On behalf of the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association, and first responders across the state of Ohio, I urge you to support House Bill 17. Thank you for your time, and I am happy to answer any questions that you have.