



**OHIO STATE HIGHWAY PATROL
RETIREE'S ASSOCIATION**
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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
SENATE INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS COMMITTEE
ON AMENDED HOUSE BILL 362
ROBERT BOOKER, PRESIDENT
OHIO HIGHWAY PATROL RETIREES' ASSOCIATION

CHAIRMAN HOTTINGER, VICE CHAIR HACKET, RANKING MEMBER BROWN AND MEMBERS OF THE SENATE INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS COMMITTEE, THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK. MY NAME IS ROBERT BOOKER AND I AM THE PRESIDENT OF THE OHIO HIGHWAY PATROL RETIREES' ASSOCIATION. I AM ALSO A RETIREE OF MORE THAN 31 YEARS OF ACTIVE SERVICE.

AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE OHIO STATE HIGHWAY PATROL RETIREES' ASSOCIATION, I AM SPEAKING TO EXPRESS OUR SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE CHANGES IN AMENDED HOUSE BILL 362 APPROVED BY THE HIGHWAY PATROL RETIREMENT SYSTEM (HPRS) BOARD OF TRUSTEES, THE OHIO RETIREMENT STUDY COUNCIL AND THE OHIO HOUSE. THESE CHANGES INCLUDE: RESTORING THE MINIMUM AGE OF RETIREMENT TO 52 FOR NEW HIRES; CALCULATION OF OFF-DUTY DISABILITY BENEFITS; AND CHANGES IN SURVIVOR BENEFITS.

THE OHIO STATE HIGHWAY PATROL RETIREES' ASSOCIATION CURRENTLY HAS OVER 1300 ACTIVE MEMBERS, WHO ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE HEALTH OF OUR RETIREMENT SYSTEM. ON BEHALF OF OUR ASSOCIATION, I WANT TO ASSURE YOU WE HAVE THE UTMOST CONFIDENCE IN THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP OF OUR RETIREMENT SYSTEM AND ITS ABILITY TO MAKE DECISIONS THAT ARE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE RETIREMENT SYSTEM AND ITS MEMBERS.

WE KNOW THAT CHANGES, WHILE SOMETIMES CONCERNING, ARE NEEDED TO ENSURE THE LONG-TERM VIABILITY OF OUR RETIREMENT SYSTEM. THESE CHANGES WILL PRESERVE OUR SYSTEM; NOT ONLY FOR OUR CURRENT RETIREES BUT FOR MANY OTHERS TRANSITIONING FROM THE ACTIVE RANKS. OUR POSITION IN THIS MATTER IS NOT PRECEDENT SETTING. IN 2012, WE SUPPORTED PENSION REFORM AND WE DO SO TODAY.

LIKE WITH OTHER PENSION SYSTEMS, OUR SYSTEM CONTINUES TO FACE ACTUARIAL ASSUMPTION CHANGES THAT HAVE NOT BEEN SEEN BEFORE. PROBABLY, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE WAS THE REDUCTION OF THE INVESTMENT ASSUMED RATE OF RETURN. THESE ASSUMPTION CHANGES INCREASE THE UNFUNDED ACTUARIAL ACCRUED LIABILITIES OF A PENSION SYSTEM. THE LEGISLATIVE CHANGES THE HPRS BOARD HAS APPROVED ARE NECESSARY AND WILL DECREASE THE AMORTIZATION PERIOD OF THE SYSTEM'S UNFUNDED ACTUARIAL ACCRUED LIABILITIES BY SEVERAL YEARS, THUS IMPROVING ITS SOLVENCY.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT OF HPRS AND CONCERN FOR THE SOLVENCY OF ALL OF OHIO'S PENSION SYSTEMS AND ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN PASSING AMENDED HOUSE BILL 362.

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THIS TESTIMONY. I WILL BE GLAD TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.