



## House Bill 431 Proponent Testimony

Chairman Eklund, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Thomas and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee my name is Tom Balzer and I am the President and CEO of the Ohio Trucking Association (OTA), representing over 1,000 trucking, moving, logistics and warehouse companies and allied vendor members. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony today in support of HB 431, which would improve Ohio's efforts in addressing the problem of human trafficking in this state.

The Ohio Trucking Association is supportive and has been a partner in the state's efforts to combat human trafficking. Often, the driving community acts as the first line of defense have against this activity, which is why the trucking industry throughout the nation has joined the fight against this widespread program.

By partnering with Truckers Against Trafficking, Ohio became the first state to mandate that all commercial driving schools teach students about human trafficking. Through this training, drivers are better equipped to identify potential victims and how to report suspicious activity. Truckers Against Trafficking has trained nearly 1,000,000 drivers. Through these efforts, thousands of tips have been received and over 1,000 of victims have been helped.

The Ohio Trucking Association applauds the sponsors on their diligent work in developing this important legislation. The Ohio Trucking Association and its members stand ready to assist the state in its fight against this horrific practice. We urge your support for this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Balzer". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Thomas A. Balzer, CAE  
President and CEO  
Ohio Trucking Association

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