

Chairman Manning, Vice-Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Maharath and members of the Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 421.

Early in this general assembly, I introduced House Bill 236, which is concerned with hospital police officers. While working through that bill we discovered what became the impetus for this legislation I am presenting before you here today.

Hospitals with their own private, proprietary police departments operate within the jurisdiction of a public police department. For a hospital's police department to have policing and arrest authority they must receive a memorandum of understanding from the public department within whose jurisdiction they abide per sec. 4973.17 (D)(1)(b) of the ORC.

Without this memorandum of understanding, the private department must call the public department to come and make arrests in their facilities even though there are fully-trained OPOTA certified officers present. This is a detriment to both the public and private department and their resources.

Two of the largest private hospital departments in our state are currently operating without this memorandum due to the threat of litigation. Let me give you a quick example. In one of these locations, an officer of a private department did something that resulted in the affected family suing him. The family also brought litigation against the private police department who employed the officer, the private entity with the department and then sued the city police department and the city that granted the memorandum with the private department.

To be clear, HB421 does not remove liability but seeks to make sure only those truly liable should be held accountable. HB421 simply states that the public department and local government that grants a memorandum of understanding to a private department should not be held liable for the actions of the officer employed by the private department.

Thank you once again Chairman Manning, Vice-Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Maharath and members of this committee for your time here today. I at this time would be glad to attempt to answer any questions you may have to the best of my ability.