



# Northern Ohio Fire Fighters Association

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[www.NOFF.org](http://www.NOFF.org)

House Criminal Justice Committee

Senate Bill 16

Proponent Testimony

Tuesday, February 8, 2022

Chairman LaRe, Vice-Chairman Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee, on behalf of the Northern Ohio Fire Fighters, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on SB 16.

Over the past couple of years, there have been examples around the country of emergency responders(ESR) being the target of intimidation, harassment, and assault. Unfortunately, this has caused some of these men and women to leave their careers serving their communities. SB 16, if enacted, would provide protections for Ohio's first responders and their families by ensuring that those who attempt to intimidate or assault responders or their families will face punishment.

Among other provision, SB 16 Increases the penalty for "assault" to a fourth degree felony if:

\* The victim is an emergency service responder, the offender knows or reasonably should know that the victim is an ESR, and it is the offender's specific purpose to commit the offense against an ESR.

NOFF would like to thank Senator Schaffer for introducing SB 16. Our members appreciate his efforts to protect Ohio's emergency responders and strongly urge the committee to favorably pass this legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sam Gmetro

President, Northern Ohio Fire Fighters