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*Advocating for Life, Faith, and Freedom in the Public Square*

To: Members of the House Criminal Justice Committee

From: Chris Long, Ohio Christian Alliance President

Re: Supporting testimony on S. B. 16

Thank you, Chairman LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Minority Member LeLand, and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee, for receiving our testimony in support of S.B. 16, that enhances protections for Ohio's first responders, , sponsored by State Senator Tim Schaffer.

S.B. 16 is legislation that will provide additional protections for police, firefighters, paramedics, EMTs, and emergency public service personnel, as well as for their families. S.B. 16 increases the penalties for those who look to assault or menace first responders while they are off duty.

The time for this legislation has come, as Ohioans witnessed almost two years ago anarchy in the streets of our cities. Protests turned into riots and civil unrest with the destruction of property and violent assaults against citizens, law enforcement and emergency personnel who were simply performing their duties, responding to calls for service. These civil servants who faithfully serve the public's trust are entitled to these additional protections that S.B. 16 details.

Another reason for this legislation is to send a clear message that we the people of Ohio support our police, firefighters, paramedics, EMTs, and emergency service personnel. When many are reconsidering whether they should put themselves or their families at risk by choosing a career in civil service, this committee and legislative body can send a strong message that we support them and we have their backs.

Thank you, Chairman LaRe and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee, for receiving our testimony in support of S.B. 16.