

**HB 564 – Part-Time Township Employees**  
**Proponent Testimony**  
**March 30, 2022**  
**House State & Local Government Committee**

Good afternoon, Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State & Local Government Committee. My name is Mark Metzger, and I am the Recreation Director for Washington Township. With me today is my colleague, Washington Township Fire Chief Scott Kujawa. Thank you for the opportunity today to testify as a proponent of House Bill 564. Washington Township supports this bill that would alter the definition of part-time township employees for purposes of healthcare on a temporary basis and would allow townships additional flexibility in managing staffing requirements.

As is the case for many employers, employee healthcare coverage is a significant cost and Washington Township is constantly striving to provide healthcare benefits to our employees while also continuing to deliver services at a reasonable rate. The provisions of HB 564 impact all departments within Washington Township but most notably the Recreation Department, which employees 150 part time employees, representing 94.3% of recreation staff.

In its 2021 Performance Review of all agencies nationwide, the National Parks and Recreation Association noted the full-time employee median average was 38.2, with just 46% of part-time staff providing direct services to the public. For comparison, in 2021, the Washington Township RecPlex employed the equivalent of 45.5 full-time staff. Of these, 95% provide programming or services directly to the public or serve in key supervisory roles. As you can see, part-time staff are the face of the Washington Township RecPlex. These statistics illustrate the disproportionate burden placed on Ohio Townships in their reliance on part-time hours to deliver recreation services.

While the burden placed on fire and EMS services is different than the burden placed on recreation services, it remains a challenge as the Washington Township Fire Department's staffing model relies on 24-part time employees to provide critical safety services to our community. Although we are not currently at that level, the department depends on the cost saving measures of these part-time employees to continue being efficient stewards of taxpayer funds and we are just one of many fire departments in the state of Ohio that relies on a part time staffing model.

As a township that qualifies as a large employer, raising Ohio's threshold to match federal requirements would allow part-time Washington Township employees to work an additional 60 hours per year. The current cap disproportionately impacts seniors in that they limit their earning potential within a single agency. In 2021, the Washington Township RecPlex employed 22 employees who approached the current Ohio part-time hour threshold. Of these, 30% were seniors not requiring health benefits but needing supplemental income. Some employees want the schedule flexibility and fluid work hours that accompany part-time employment but do not require benefits.



**Board of Trustees**  
Dale M. Berry  
Sharon A. Lowry  
Scott R. Paulson  
Gary P. Smiga, Fiscal Officer  
Jesse K. Lightle, Township Administrator

**P:** (937) 433-0152

**F:** (937) 438-2752

**Washington Township**  
8200 McEwen Road  
Washington Township, OH 45458  
Hours: M–F 8 am to 4:30 pm

**W:** [washingtontp.org](http://washingtontp.org)

Since the current federal requirements for healthcare are different than Ohio's under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, the time and care taken to ensure that part-time staff do not go over both state and federal caps is not an efficient use of time or resources. Standardizing to a single cap would alleviate this challenge and create streamlined and efficient reporting.

Washington Township supports HB 564, and we thank you for the opportunity to comment. I am happy to answer any questions you or the committee members may have.