



**Senator Bob Peterson – 17<sup>th</sup> District**  
**House State & Local Government Committee**  
**Senate Bill 278 – Sponsor Testimony**  
**December 1, 2022**

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for allowing me to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 278, which will designate the first full week of February as “Ohio Burn Awareness Week.” The week will serve as remembrance for all who have lost their lives or been injured as a result of a burn.

One week ago today, many of us celebrated Thanksgiving with family and friends. And every year, local fire departments across the nation put out the same informational videos and press releases on how to safely deep-fry a turkey without catching your home on fire. With that being said, data from the CDC tells us that 1.1 million burn injuries require medical attention each year in the United States. Of the 1.1 million burn injuries, up to 10,000 people in the U.S. die every year of burn-related infections.<sup>1</sup> Although these statistics are alarming, the majority of these injuries are preventable.

A constituent of mine from Pickaway County – Hunter Young – reached out to me about one year ago for a high-school history assignment in which he had to write to a public official. In his letter, he recounted a horrific accident he was in where his vehicle became engulfed in flames as he was driving at a racetrack in Jackson County. He spent 25 days in the burn unit at Nationwide Children’s, learning how to walk again as the burns on his feet, ankles, knees, and fingers began to heal. Mr. Young inspired the creation of this bill to remember the trauma suffered by burn victims and their loved ones, while showing our support for them. He and other burn victims are examples of the amazing strength of the human spirit and our ability to overcome extremely difficult circumstances.

S.B. 278 will align Ohio with the American Burn Association’s National Burn Awareness Week, which is observed the first full week in February. The American Burn Association promotes and supports research, education, care, rehabilitation, and prevention, and is dedicated to improving the lives of everyone affected by burn injuries.<sup>2</sup> The Association provides burn prevention resources and fact sheets surrounding safety in the home, home oxygen, cooking safety, and home heating.

In summary, S.B. 278 will not only establish Ohio Burn Awareness Week, but will also help to shed light on the dangers that exist with burns and how to decrease the associated risks.

Chairman Wiggam and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, I urge favorable consideration of Senate Bill 278, and thank you for this opportunity to give sponsor testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions you have at this time.

<sup>1</sup> *Burns Fact Sheet*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). Retrieved March 1, 2022, from <https://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/burns.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> American Burn Association. (2017, May 10). *Who we are*. American Burn Association. Retrieved March 1, 2022, from <https://ameriburn.org/who-we-are/>