



Vandalia^{ohio}
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333 James E. Bohanan Memorial Drive
Vandalia, OH 45377

call 937.898.5891
fax 937.898.6117

November 27, 2023

The Honorable Phil Plummer
77 South High Street, Floor 13
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Opposition of H.B. No. 296 by Representatives Abrams and Hall regarding “Amendment to Section 742.33 of the Revised Code”

Dear Representative Plummer,

As the city manager of Vandalia, OH, I am writing to you to express opposition to H.B. No. 296 as proposed by Representatives Abrams and Hall regarding the amendment to section 742.33 of the Revised Code to increase employer contribution amounts of full-time municipal police officers to the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund. I respectfully encourage you to vote against its passage if given the opportunity. As the city manager of a local government, I oppose this bill because of the increase in costs and negative impact on our ability to provide public services.

Over the next five years, the proposed rate increase included in H.B. 296 would result in an increase in direct personnel costs to the City of Vandalia totaling approximately \$635,500. This new unfunded mandate is a general expense that is equal to the approximate cost of the total wages, salaries, benefits, and fringes for one full-time police officer or firefighter each year. Passage of this bill will create hardships for small cities like Vandalia and will have disruptive impacts on municipal budgets across the State of Ohio – possibly resulting in service level reductions relating to public safety or other public services. This legislation will jeopardize cities’ ability to adequately staff public safety forces and will not contribute to the health, safety, and well-being of Ohio residents. Ohio Police & Fire Pension Fund has failed to demonstrate a need for the increases. Ohio Police & Fire Pension Fund has failed to provide suitable alternatives that do not burden the employer alone. Please oppose House Bill 296 and any increases borne by the employer.

Thank you for your consideration of my position as a city manager in a small community. I oppose this bill because there is no need for the increase, and the additional costs would negatively impact on our ability to provide public services. I respectfully encourage you to oppose the adoption of H.B. 296.

Very Respectfully,

Daniel D. Wendt
City Manager