



Robert Rocky F. Hill, Public Safety Director
City of Cambridge – Municipal Complex
814 Wheeling Avenue, 2nd Floor
Cambridge, OH 43725

November 22, 2023

Ohio House of Representatives
Pension Committee
c/o The Ohio House

Dear Honorable Pension Committee Representatives:

I am writing in response to House Bill 296 and the impact that this will have on the City of Cambridge and its Police Department.

The City of Cambridge is a small community of 10,462 and we receive our monies to subsidize our police department in our General Fund through local income tax. The police department uses approximately 34% of the General Fund monies to provide safety services to our community. The total budget for the City of Cambridge that is being passed for the 2024 year showed approximately a surplus of \$11,000.00 in the General Fund line item and the estimated increase for this bill would be with us down officers to be around \$30,000.00 plus. This significantly impacts total services to our community in other areas as well as public safety. That difference may not seem much to others but in a small community like ours, it can be devastating.

We are presently down five (5) full-time police officers and our present budget costs for the Police and Fire Pension would rise to over \$117,486.23 if we stayed at our present staffing level and there were no additional pay raises over that four-year time frame. In essence, the increase to 24% would cost us not being able to hire at least one police officer plus part of another officer position. That creates an added safety issue to our community but also to the very officers that serve our City.

I am dismayed at how this bill is being presented on a short time frame and virtually limiting some from providing input because of the 6:00am Monday, November 27th deadline, especially being a holiday week and most municipal offices are closed until Monday. I would hope the committee would take a closer look at the operational policies and issues of the Police and Fire Pension as most people find it outlandish to provide bonuses to employees in the sizeable numbers that have been printed in the past, especially in times when the economy took a dive. This would clear up the solvency issues that seem to always be present and apparently has been the catalyst as to why the immediate increase. Please reconsider this bill due to the impact on communities such as ours.

Sincerely,

Robert Rocky F. Hill
Director of Public Safety
City of Cambridge