



**Office of the Mayor**

November 22, 2023

Ohio House of Representatives, Pensions Committee  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, OH 43215

**Re: Opposition to HB 296 - Increase contributions to Police & Fire Pension Fund**

Dear Chairman Mathews, Vice Chair King, and Members of the Pensions Committee,

We are reaching out in opposition to HB 296 because of the negative impact this bill will have on our city's ability to support, fund, and maintain our current and future police force. We oppose HB 296 in its current form.

HB296 makes drastic changes to the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund. These changes include raising the employer share of pension contributions from 19.95% of the total police payroll to a final rate of 24%, effective in 2027. This change will harm the City of Elyria.

Since state support for local governments has decreased dramatically over the last 15 years, finding ways to entirely fund our public safety budget has been difficult. If HB 296 were to pass, our current city budget could not absorb such a considerable cost unless we made deep cuts to critical programs, core services, and the public safety budget. This would affect not only our city budget but also the safety of our citizens.

After close examination, we deem the potential damage and cost of HB 296 outweigh the potential benefits. We therefore oppose HB 296 and ask you to refrain from advancing the bill out of committee. My office is happy to answer any questions or provide additional information to evaluate the cost and impacts of HB 296 fully.

Sincerely,

  
Frank Whitfield  
Mayor