



Ohio House Pension Committee
HB 296, Interested Party Written Testimony
Kevin Falvey, Painesville Township Fire Department, Local 3411 (Lake County)
December 12, 2023

Chairman Mathews, Vice Chair King, Ranking Member Lightbody, and members of the House Pensions Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony as an Interested Party for House Bill 296. My name is Kevin Falvey, a firefighter for Painesville Township Fire Department, Local 3411 (Lake County).

My Story

I have been a firefighter for Painesville Township for 15 years.

Financing Houses To Putting Out Fires In Houses

I attended Kent State University where I received my Bachelor's Degree in Finance. Upon graduation from college in 2003 and immediately took a job working for a large financial institution in Northeast Ohio. In the years that I worked there I was fortunate to post into several different departments within the bank and got a really good sense of what working in Corporate America was like. The pay was good and the people were great, but I quickly found that it wasn't for me. I left that job and went to work at my Father's Real Estate company. It's a small business in Painesville, Ohio that he's owned for close to 40 years. On most days there were three of us in the office, it was quite a different feel. As the real estate market began to take a turn I knew that I needed a more stable job. One day at work he gave me the best advice that I've ever received, he told me that I should go to the fire academy and see what I thought.

Grandfather's Pride of Service

My grandfather, was a career firefighter for the City of Cleveland. My grandfather died too young from a heart attack, but my dad often spoke with a lot of pride about his service. I was in my late 20's and had no knowledge of the fire service. I went to the academy and quickly realized that I had found what I was meant to do. Now, 15 years later I am grateful everyday for this profession.

You Don't Become A Fire Fighter To Become Rich – The Pension Is Our Stability

I have no doubt that if I would have stayed in the world of Finance, I would probably have done pretty well for myself. I certainly didn't join the Fire Service to become rich. Although one of my main motivations for becoming a firefighter was to get into a more stable career that I enjoyed doing, it wasn't until recently that I've realized just how important my benefits and pension are. I'm now 42 years old and have 3 small children at home. I know that so much of my family's financial future depends on having a strong pension system and it's one of the main reasons why I've been able to serve my community for the past 15 years

I respectfully request you to vote in favor of HB 296.