



Madison Fire District  
840 River St.  
Madison, Ohio 44057  
(440) 428-1522  
[www.madisonfiredist.com](http://www.madisonfiredist.com)

02/27/2023

Committee Chair John  
Committee Vice Chair Dean  
Ranking member Brennan  
The State and local Government Committee for the House Representatives

I am providing my written testimony in support of reversing the changes made for EMS education in H.B. 509, which was detrimental to the health of fire and EMS in the State of Ohio. The fire and EMS services throughout the State, many of which are volunteer, are struggling with the recruitment and retention of our providers. Language contained in HB 509 added even more challenges in both areas.

Education in Ohio, prior to HB 509, allowed fire and EMS services the opportunity to receive education from their Medical Director and his/her assignees, and many of these hospitals, especially in rural areas are NOT affiliated with an accredited educational facility but provide crucial education to our providers. Many fire and EMS services applied for and were granted a Continuing Education Site certification allowing them, in concert with their site's Medical Director, to provide in-house continuing education to control the cost and content of education, and cater more specifically to their departments needs. Restricting continuing education to accredited facilities strips the autonomy of the department to meet their needs and creates several obstacle for fire and EMS. First, nearly two-thirds of our counties in Ohio DO NOT have an accredited training center within the county, creating hardship in obtaining education, especially in the rural areas where many of the departments are strictly volunteer. Second, shifting the burden of continuing education to these accredited facilities is going to add a significant volume of paperwork and time, something that will not be provided at no cost, meaning it impacts our already strained budgets.

Accredited facilities in Ohio have a huge responsibility in recruiting students and preparing them to enter the workforce. Having worked in both accredited and continuing education facilities, they also provide two very different types of education, initial education or primal learning vs. experiential education which builds upon the knowledge and experience of the providers. With this said, the instructors who educate in each domain have two very different methods of educating their students. In my professional opinion, combining the two is not synergistic, rather it could be detrimental to the overall quality provided in both areas.

Lastly, HB 509 made significant changes to who is able to provide education, not just what facility, but the individuals certification. The language changes in HB 509 significantly impact "where" we can receive continuing education, and equally as impacting, "who" can provide it. The language in HB 509 will essentially strip nearly two-thirds of the State's instructors of their ability to educate. Within this two-thirds lies many individuals with decades of experience to share, which is a critical piece of continuing education, providing educational experience to experienced providers. Sadly, experience

*"A passion for the community"*



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provides us with the best education, and eliminating experienced providers from being able to share the experience only lessens the value of our continuing education.

Please accept this letter as my written testimony in support of HB 52, rescinding the language adopted in HB 509. I hope that we can work together with the fire and EMS leadership in the future to strengthen the service and add value to the education.

In safety,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tod Baker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tod Baker, Fire Chief  
Madison Fire District  
Lake County, Ohio