

Testimony Of CAPT Leslie Macdonald, USPHS (Active Duty)  
In Support of HB 126

Chair Roemer, Vice Chair Merrin, Ranking Member Troy, and all honorable members of the House Ways & Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present proponent testimony on HB 126.

I am an active duty commissioned officer in the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) and have been a resident of Ohio since 1993. I have served our nation in uniform for over 30 years, comprising over 21 years on active duty with the USPHS, and 9 years as a reservist with the United States Naval Reserves (2 years) and the Massachusetts Army National Guard (7 years). I am currently stationed in Cincinnati, Ohio and assigned to the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (CDC/NIOSH). I am a senior scientist officer who leads epidemiologic investigations addressing national public health priorities. My duties as an officer have included mobilizing in response to local, national and international public health emergencies (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic, Ebola outbreak, Haiti Earthquake, Hurricane Katrina), and providing ancillary response duties from my home duty station (e.g., mental health and wellness debriefs of officers' demobilizing from challenging assignments, such as the Unaccompanied Minors Mission at the southern border).

The deployment experience of my USPHS colleagues, many from Ohio, further illustrates the nature and scope of emergency response actions of USPHS officers, including mobilizations to East Palestine, OH to assess the health effects from the Norfolk Southern train derailment, to New York City to conduct air sampling following the September 11<sup>th</sup> terror attacks, to Boston following the Marathon bombing (community mental health support), to the Washington DC post office (environmental assessments following anthrax mailings), and to the Rosebud Indian Reservation in SD (mental health infrastructure support following suicide outbreaks).

I am writing to encourage your support of HB 126. I feel it is important that there be parity in Ohio law governing the treatment of all members of the Uniformed Services, including with regard to the exemption of active-duty service member earnings from municipal income tax. Like those who serve in the Armed Services, members of the USPHS and other Uniformed Services are part of a highly trained force that mobilizes to hazard zones in service to our nation. My go-bags are packed. I stand ready to respond to the next call to deploy.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for your consideration of my testimony. Passing HB 126 would bring parity in Ohio tax law to all active-duty members of the Uniformed Services who reside in Ohio and serve 24/7 to protect and defend the health of the nation and its citizens. I welcome the opportunity to respond to any Committee questions.

In Officio Salutis,



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