

March 21, 2023

Mr., Chairman and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Vernon Stanforth, and I am the Sheriff of Fayette County.

I appear before you in my capacity as a small, rural Ohio county Sheriff, and as a proponent of SB 35, CPT funding. Specifically, the portion which reallocates unexpended funds at the end of the fiscal year.

I employ 24 full-time peace officers at the Fayette County Sheriffs Office. Those deputies fulfill the duties and responsibilities incumbent upon the office of Sheriff. They operate the jail, provide investigative services, and operate the road patrol. According to the proposed language of Senate Bill 35, my office would be eligible to apply for these unexpended funds to purchase much needed equipment for use by my deputies. Items such as vehicles, body armor, body cameras, less than lethal weapons and supplies for said purchases.

There are 24 Sheriff's Offices statewide that this provision could have a positive impact upon. The tax base in most of these small rural counties does not always provide for sufficient funding for equipment for public safety/first responders. Having these new unexpended funds available to the small and rural counties across Ohio will allow Sheriffs and their deputies to have better protection for themselves and the citizens they are sworn to protect and serve.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. If there are any questions I will try to answer them.

Vernon P. Stanforth,

Sheriff, Fayette County

1500 Robinson Rd., SE.

Washington Court House, Ohio 43160

(c) 740-572-0058