



OHIO TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION

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March 8, 2023

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The Honorable Kristina Roegner, Chair
Senate Government Oversight Committee
The Ohio Senate
One Capitol Square
Senate Building, 1st Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: SB 53

Dear Chairwoman Roegner:

On behalf of the Ohio Township Association (OTA), I am writing in support of Senate Bill 53, which would lower the age for an original appointment of a police officer from 21 to 18.

The legislation gives communities the ability to address any gaps in recruitment in the critical area of public safety. By lowering the age requirement, police departments can expand their recruitment pool of candidates, and develop new officers for the needs of their community.

In 2019, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) released data from a survey they conducted. The IACP survey found recruitment challenges are widespread and affects law enforcement agencies of all types, sizes, and locations across the country. As noted in their report, if these agencies are unable to replace those who have retired or have left the profession with new recruits, it will significantly increase the strain on existing public safety services.

Senate Bill 53 is a permissive change that helps address townships with police departments' recruitment challenges and supports a more robust police force. Additionally, this legislation brings the age requirement in line with other first responder positions.

The OTA urges support of SB 53. Thank you for your consideration of our position. If you have any questions or concerns about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me or OTA Director of Governmental Affairs Kyle Brooks at 614-863-0045.

Sincerely,

Executive Director