



OHIO SENATE GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
March 8, 2023

Written Proponent Testimony
Senate Bill 53

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Ohio Senate Government Oversight Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding our support for Senate Bill 53, which would lower the age for an original appointment of a police officer from the age of 21 to the age of 18.

The Ohio Municipal League represents more than 730 cities and villages from across the state of Ohio, and the overwhelming majority of these municipalities have their own police departments.

In a recent survey of OML-member communities, recruitment and retention was one of the top challenges our members said they were currently facing – with many of them specifically citing problems with finding qualified individuals to serve as police officers.

By permissively lowering the age someone can become a police officer to the age of 18, Ohio municipalities will have the option to recruit and hire these newly qualified young adults, strengthening their police force while still allowing them with flexibility at the local level to determine how to best develop their new officers.

As many Ohio communities struggle in meeting the basic needs of their residents and businesses, including in public safety, Senate Bill 53 is a welcome addition in helping communities to have and maintain an adequate police force.

We appreciate Chair Roegner and Senator Reynolds sponsoring this legislation and responding to the needs of our municipal safety forces.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support for Senate Bill 53 on behalf of Ohio municipalities.

Kent Scarrett
Executive Director
Ohio Municipal League