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Letter of Support – House Bill 476 Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association

October 26, 2025

Dear Chair Stewart, Vice Chair Dovilla, Ranking Member Sweeney, and Members of the Ohio House Finance Committee:

On behalf of the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association (OFCA), thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House Bill 476. Our organization represents fire and EMS leaders from across Ohio, who are charged with ensuring the safety and resilience of our communities.

House Bill 476 responsibly updates Ohio's Charitable Gaming Law to authorize online raffles for qualified charitable organizations, including volunteer fire departments and firefighter organizations. The legislation preserves the intent and oversight of charitable gaming while modernizing the tools available to support critical public safety missions.

Local fire departments, particularly those in rural and underserved areas, rely heavily on fundraising to sustain operations such as:

- Equipment replacement and upgrades
- Training and certification for firefighters and EMS personnel
- Community risk reduction programs
- Fire prevention and safety education initiatives

Traditional fundraising methods have become increasingly challenging. Online raffle capability provides an accessible platform to expand community participation and keep these revenue streams viable.

We further appreciate the emergency measure designation included in the bill, which recognizes the urgent need for steady and reliable funding for essential community services.

The OFCA strongly supports House Bill 476 and urges its swift passage. Thank you for your commitment to Ohio's fire and emergency services providers.

Sincerely,

Michelle Fitzgibbon
Executive Director
Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association