

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 6/6/2025

Name: Adam Hory

Are you representing: Yourself ☐ Organization ☒

Organization (If Applicable): Town& Country Fire District

Position/Title: Chief

Address: 60 N. Lincoln St. P.O. Box 175

City: West Salem State: Ohio Zip: 44287

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Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes ☒ No ☐

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): House Bill 132

Specific Issue: Changes to the current Ohio Move Over Law

Are you testifying as a: Proponent ☒ Opponent ☐ Interested Party ☐

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes ☒ No ☐

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 5 minutes

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

I am a proponent of H.B. 132 that increases fines and penalties for violators of the Ohio Move Over Law. In my opinion as a Fire Chief the current penalties are not enough of a deterrent as we see continual violations while working emergencies and have lost two firefighters due to these violations.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.

Chairman Thomas, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Isaacsohn, and members of the House Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 132, also known as Philip Wigal's Law.

My name is Chief Adam Hory from Town and Country Fire District in West Salem Ohio. We are a small combination department with 4 full time employee's and the rest of the department is volunteers. We cover 70 square miles that includes 10 miles of Interstate 71.

On April 11th, 2022 Lt. Wigal a 16 year member of our department was struck and killed while working the scene of a motor vehicle crash when a semi that did not move over struck our engine and then Lt. Wigal as well as injuring a state trooper. Since that day the Wigal family has made it a priority to help all first responders by getting laws changed to make it safer for us working on our roadways. Several meetings were held with the Wigal family, myself, Ohio State Patrol, ODOT and Representative Scott Wiggam to discuss the best course of action. Representative Merideth Craig and Representative Melanie Miller took the information from those meetings to write and introduce the bill before you.

As I stand before you today, I'm saddened and angered to announce that on April 18th, 2025 we lost Lt. Paul Mickolick who was also struck due to a secondary crash while working on the scene of a motor vehicle accident.

As Firefighters one of the biggest dangers we face is working on the side of the roadways. It's crazy to say but fire is way more predictable than the drivers we face. Statistics reveal that from 2015 to 2020, there were over 5,000 crashes involving vehicles that did not move over for stopped emergency and road service vehicles. In 2020 alone, Ohio saw over 600 crashes involving vehicles that violated the Move Over Law. These crashes led to 21 deaths and over 200 serious injuries.

In 2024 the Ohio State Patrol teamed up with troopers from four other states Indiana, Michigan, West Virginia and Pennsylvania in a collective effort to do a week long blitz to crack down on Move Over violations. This ran from July 21st- July 27th. Collectively, troopers from the five states cited 1,134 violators during the enforcement effort. Ohio alone issued just under half of these citations at 511. This to me is an alarming number and it underscores that the current penalties are not enough of a deterrent.

I would be confident in saying on almost every incident that we work on the roadways there is at least one violation of the Move Over Law we encounter, and that number goes to 100% when working on the Interstate. I look at vehicles as several thousand pound weapons and they should be treated as such. In my own opinion the increase in aggressive, distracted and reckless driving is staggering.

Our department as well as all Wanye County departments have adopted new operating procedures for these roadway incidents. We are throwing all the manpower and resources we can to set up early warning and have several additional blocker vehicles on scene. This is very taxing on county operations, but we are willing to do whatever it takes to save a life. Unfortunately, it is not enough. Incidents are still happening and that's why we are pleading for your help.

We respectfully ask for your support of House Bill 132. Thank you for the opportunity to testify as a proponent today. We welcome any questions from the committee at this time.