Northern Ohio Fire Fighters Association

P.O. Box 222, Mount Eaton, Ohio 44659

www.NOFF.org

November 4, 2025

Proponent Testimony: HB 372 (Abrams, Plummer) Increased Penalty – Murder Of A First Responder (Larry Henderson Act)

Chair Thomas, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Synenberg, and Members of the Ohio House Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony for HB 372 (Abrams, Plummer) Increased Penalty – Murder Of A First Responder (Larry Henderson Act.) My name is Sam Gmetro, and I am in my 20th year of service as a professional firefighter. I am also a 21-year resident of the City of Cleveland and the President of the Northern Ohio Fire Fighters Association (NOFF.)

I am submitting written proponent testimony on behalf of the Northern Ohio Firefighters Association, in regard to the introduced version of HB 372.

NOFF represents firefighters in five Ohio counties, and countless retired members throughout Ohio. We have a history of service and we know the importance of working to move Ohio forward, as our members have served on the State Fire Commission and multiple statewide task forces. We have been involved in regionalization projects, fire life safety programs, recent Ohio Supreme Court case law, and previous pension reform. In addition, giving back and being active in the communities we serve, and those beyond, is very important to NOFF and its members. We have organized and raised millions of dollars in funding for various charities over the years through NOFF Charities 501(c)(3) and programs like Aluminum Cans for Burned Children to benefit burn victims and firefighters and their families in need.

Thank you to the sponsors for this legislation. As one of the sponsors said, HB 372 **has provisions that simply take away the possibility of parole, making the penalty, decided by the jury and judge - the death penalty or life imprisonment without the possibility of parole**. NOFF feels this makes sense as killing a first responder is certainly a direct attack on safety, and those trying to provide it. Thus, that perpetrator must now stay in prison where they belong, without the ability of parole. We are in this line of work to save lives and Ohio should not tolerate violence to safety professionals trying to help others. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 372.

Sam Gmetro
President, Northern Ohio Firefighters Association (NOFF)