Chair Thomas, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Synenberg, and members of the House Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 372, the Larry Henderson Act

My name is Lori Henderson, and I am in front of you as the widow of Deputy Larry Henderson of the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office, who was murdered in the line of duty on May 2, 2025. Larry was struck down for no reason other than wearing his uniform and doing his job, serving and protecting the citizens of our community. He was a devoted husband, father, and public servant whose life was taken far too soon by individuals who showed no regard for the value of human life.

For me and for our family, Larry's death was not just the loss of a husband and father, it was the loss of our future, our peace, and the life we had built together. Every day since that horrific moment, we have carried the weight of his absence. We've endured the sleepless nights, the empty holidays, and the reminders of all that he will never see or experience.

But the pain doesn't end with his death. Larry's murderer has not even gone to trial yet, but the pain resurfaces every time we have a hearing. Each one reopens wounds we are working hard to heal and forces us to re-live the trauma. The thought of the possibility of having to prepare statements and revisit the details of Larry's murder for parole hearings after the pain of the last six months, and that the upcoming trial will be, is unbearable. The thought of the person responsible for Larry's death being given another chance to walk free and fighting to prevent that is cruel and unfair to the families of the victims who are forced to endure this process over and over again.

That is why House Bill 372, the Larry Henderson Act, is so deeply personal to me and so critically important. This bill recognizes what so many of us who have lost loved ones to violent crime already know: that justice is not truly served when victims' families are condemned to a lifetime of reliving their loss through endless parole proceedings. Once the trial is over and a sentence is given, families should not have to fear being dragged back into that same nightmare every few years.

My husband will never walk free again. He will never get to come home, celebrate milestones, or live the life he earned through his years of service and sacrifice. Those who chose to take his life should never be afforded the opportunity to walk free either. To do so would dishonor his memory, diminish the meaning of justice, and inflict even greater pain on those of us left behind.

Those who take the life of another, especially a peace officer or other first responder acting in the service of the public, should never again have the opportunity to walk among free citizens. The sentence should reflect the gravity of the crime and the sanctity of the life taken. The constant reopening of these cases and subsequent traumatization of the survivors does not serve justice; it only perpetuates suffering.

I urge you to support House Bill 372 and to stand with the families of fallen heroes like my husband. This legislation is about compassion, closure, and respect for those who have already endured the worst kind of loss imaginable. No family should have to keep fighting for the justice that was already won in court.

Please, ensure that Larry's sacrifice, and the sacrifices of all those who gave their lives in service, will mean something lasting. Let his name stand for justice that endures.

Thank you, Chair and members of the committee, for your time and for your continued commitment to justice and public safety.

With deepest gratitude,

Lori Henderson

Widow of Deputy Larry Henderson

Hamilton County Sheriff's Office