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Energy

Public Safety



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Rep. Hall HB 139 Sponsor Testimony

Chair King, Vice Chair Kishman, Ranking Member Sims, and members of the Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 139, common sense legislation to ensure our fire hydrants are continually being checked and maintained.

On January 7 of this year, we watched as tragedy struck in the state of California with devastating wildfires, taking the lives of innocent people and destroying any and all property in its path. As the events unfolded, we quickly learned that one of the biggest challenges firefighters had was their hydrants. During operations, they faced difficulty in getting the amount of pressure they needed out of the hydrants to fight the blazes, leading to changes of strategy and disbelief from many.

What if I told you didn't have to go far to understand that those fire hydrant issues can happen anywhere? What if I told you that it happened to me when I was responding to a full involved housefire in my district? And what if I told you it wasn't the first time the hydrants failed us on the fire ground?

Today, I bring to HB 139 before you, legislation that will provide peace of mind to homeowners, taxpayers, and firefighters knowing that when in a fire occurs, one of the most important tools to fight that fire works. After watching the situation unfold in California and thinking back to what had happened in my district, I reached out to LSC and was quickly taken aback as there is currently nothing in the Ohio Revised code that talks about hydrants. There are provisions listed in the Ohio Fire code and the administrative code, which I have combined into House Bill 139.

For many of you, on the way in today, you most likely passed a fire hydrant, maybe hundreds of fire hydrants, and before today, I bet most of you had never thought of how fire hydrant worked or when the last time that fire hydrant next to your house was checked. This page and half legislation is a promise to our neighbors that the tools and resources meant to keep them safe, will actually do so.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony. I'm happy to take any questions at this time.