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## **House Bill 280**

### **Proponent Testimony – October 15, 2025**

### **Fire Chief Steve Agenbroad**

Chair Peterson, Vice Chair Teska, Ranking Member White, and members of the Public Insurance and Pensions Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to offer proponent testimony on behalf of the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association (OFCA) in support of House Bill 280. My name is Chief Steve Agenbroad and I serve as the Fire Chief of Clearcreek Fire District in Warren County and the Vice President of the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association.

House Bill 280 updates several sections of the Ohio Revised Code related to the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund (OP&F). The OFCA strongly supports the goal of ensuring the long-term solvency and equity of the Police and Fire Pension Fund.

HB 280 provides a structured, predictable increase in employer contributions for police that matches firefighter rates. This parity is both logical and fair, ensuring that all first responders' retirement security is funded at equivalent levels, reflecting shared risk and service expectations.

Moreover, the bill builds in guardrails by limiting the Board's ability to adjust rates (no more than 0.5% annually, capped at 1.5% over three years), ensuring stability and transparency for local governments.

Fire chiefs understand firsthand how pension funding affects recruitment, retention, and operational planning. Maintaining a solvent and stable pension system:

- Protects the retirement benefits that help retain experienced firefighters and officers in Ohio communities.
- Preserves departmental predictability in budgeting for personnel costs.
- Ensures the continuity of local emergency response services, avoiding workforce disruption due to pension uncertainty.

HB 280 does not impose a sudden or unpredictable burden. Instead, it phases in employer contribution adjustments and aligns them with actuarial needs already anticipated by many municipalities.



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The OFCA also appreciates that HB 280 retains oversight by the Ohio Retirement Study Council and requires the OP&F Board to report any amortization periods exceeding 30 years. This transparency allows the General Assembly to monitor fund health and ensure local governments are not blindsided by unplanned changes.

By stabilizing the pension fund now, the bill reduces long-term liabilities and helps prevent more severe contribution shocks or benefit adjustments in the future.

In closing, the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association urges your support for House Bill 280. This legislation is a prudent, measured step toward maintaining pension stability, fairness between fire and police employers, and continued protection for the men and women who keep our communities safe.

We thank Representatives Abrams and Hall for their leadership on this issue and stand ready to work with this Committee and the General Assembly to ensure successful implementation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I would be happy to answer any questions.