

October 9, 2025

Representative Bernard Willis
Ohio State Representative
13th Floor, 77 South Front Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Representative Willis,

My name is Brandon Rice, and I am a Police Officer with the Liberty Township Police Dept. I am writing to you today in support of House Bill 424. House Bill 424 would provide me and my fellow officers with the ability to change departments and possibly careers while staying in the public sector without being penalized. All public employees have chosen to serve their communities in one way or another. This service should not be limited to a career field we chose at 18 or 21 years old, instead there should be the option to transfer into a different department or agency in the public sector so we may continue to serve our communities.

One of the biggest issues I see with the current laws and regulations is an officer that begins his or her career at a department that utilizes Ohio Police and Fire Pension system cannot make a lateral transfer to a department that takes part in the Ohio Public Employee Retirement System without ultimately having more time worked in OPERS before transferring the time from OP&F. This barrier exists at a time where it is difficult enough to attract and retain an experienced workforce, especially when it comes to Police Officers. For example, under the current pension laws, I currently have 17 1/2 years of service paid into Ohio Police and Fire retirement. I paid this time while working for the City of Cortland as a sworn police officer. I transferred in 2023 to Liberty Twp. Police, which is a larger agency with more career opportunity for me. Due to the change in pension systems I now need to have more than 17 ½ years in OPERS before I am eligible to retire. However, should I transfer back to an OP&F department I would need roughly 5 years to meet the 25 year minimum to be eligible to retire. This currently would bring me to approximately 36 years full time service as a police officer in addition to 3 years part time as a dispatcher and police officer. The current law, in my opinion penalizes officers like myself while still performing the same job just in a different pension system.

Again, I reiterate my strong support for House Bill 424, and I would ask all the legislators involved in the process to pass this bill swiftly. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Brandon Rice
Police Officer
Liberty Twp. PD