



**Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police
Proponent Testimony for House Bill 210
Chief Robert Butler, Independence Police Department**

Chair Abrams, Vice Chair Miller, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the House Public Safety Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 210, which addresses the growing crisis of catalytic converter theft in Ohio.

As Chief of Police for the City of Independence, I have seen firsthand the impact of this crime on our residents and businesses. Catalytic converter theft is not just a property crime. It is an easy and fast crime to commit—often taking thieves just one or two minutes to remove a converter from a vehicle. But the consequences for victims are far-reaching and severe.

When a catalytic converter is stolen, the victim is often left unable to drive their vehicle legally or safely. The cost of replacing a stolen converter can average \$2,500 or more, and in some cases, repairs can escalate to \$5,000, especially if additional damage occurs during the theft. For many families and small business owners, these are devastating, unexpected expenses. The loss of a vehicle, even temporarily, disrupts daily life—making it difficult to get to work, transport children, or run a business. Insurance may not always cover the full cost, and premiums can increase.

Senate Bill 165 is a critical step forward. By classifying catalytic converters as “special purchase articles,” the bill requires proof of ownership for all sales, increasing accountability and making it harder for thieves to profit from their crimes. The bill also enhances penalties, making theft of a catalytic converter a fifth-degree felony, and a fourth-degree felony for repeat offenders. Businesses that knowingly facilitate illegal sales face substantial fines, up to \$50,000 per violation. These measures send a clear message: Ohio will not tolerate this crime, and those who profit from it will be held accountable.

Importantly, this legislation brings scrap yards and secondary metal dealers into partnership with law enforcement. By requiring stricter recordkeeping and reporting, and by prohibiting salvage dealers from accepting catalytic converters without proper documentation, we close the loopholes that have allowed this black market to thrive.

I urge you to support House Bill 210. This legislation is necessary to protect Ohioans from a crime that is easy to commit but leaves a lasting impact on its victims. It empowers law enforcement, holds businesses accountable, and ensures that criminals cannot get away with targeting our communities for quick profit.

Thank you for your consideration.