



SENATOR STEVE WILSON

House Transportation Committee

March 3, 2025

Senate Bill 16

Chairman Willis, Vice-Chair Daniels, Ranking Member Grim, and members of the House Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 16. This bill passed out of the Senate this General Assembly by a vote of 32-0, and by a vote of 28-0 in the previous General Assembly. I am proud to have the support of the American Automobile Association and the Ohio Trucking Association, and I expect you will hear from them in a future hearing.

Current law requires drivers to carefully move over one lane, or slow down if changing lanes is not possible, only when approaching *certain vehicles* such as: public safety vehicles, emergency vehicles, road service vehicles, and waste collection vehicles.

If a member of this Committee, or any of your constituents has to pull over on the shoulder of Interstate 71 to change a tire, passing motorists *are not* required to slow down or move over under current law, even if the vehicle has its hazard lights on. Additionally, research from The Ohio State University shows that, in many cases, Ohioans are already unsure of which vehicles they should slow down or move over for.

This legislation would require drivers to make their best effort to slow down to the posted speed limit, or move over a lane, when approaching a distressed vehicle. A distressed vehicle is defined as a vehicle that is pulled over on the shoulder that is displaying hazard lights, flares, or some form of emergency signage.

This bill *does not* increase penalties on drivers who do not slow down or move over. The current penalty that drivers are subject to when they do not slow down or move over for the *certain vehicles* previously mentioned will now apply to *distressed vehicles* under this bill.

This is a common-sense public safety bill that is the result of collaboration between Chairman Patton and the Senate Transportation Committee, the Department of Transportation, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, and other interested parties. This bill will save lives, prevent accidents, and eliminate any confusion for Ohioans who find themselves approaching a vehicle in distress on a highway.

Thank you for your time. I stand ready to answer any questions the Committee may have.