Chair Johnson, Vice Chair Wilson, Ranking Member Weinstein, and members of the Senate Armed Affairs, and Public Safety Committee:

My name is Robert Butler, and I serve as the Chief of Police for the Independence Police Department and the President of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP). On behalf of our members across the state, I am writing to express our support for House Bill 533, sponsored by Representative Kevin Miller.

This legislation addresses an oversight in the Ohio Revised Code that directly impacts our ability to provide justice for victims of roadway tragedies.

Currently, Ohio's vehicular homicide and vehicular assault statutes (2903.06 and 2903.08) are restricted to a specific list of vehicles, including motor vehicles, motorcycles, and snowmobiles. However, as the landscape of mobility changes, our laws have not kept pace.

In recent years, we have seen a significant surge in the use of Under-Speed Vehicles (USVs), such as golf carts, as well as mopeds, motor scooters, and All-Purpose Vehicles (APVs) on public roads. Under current law, if an individual recklessly or while under the influence causes a fatality while operating a golf cart, they often cannot be charged with vehicular homicide simply because of the *type* of vehicle they were driving. This is a technicality that leaves victims' families without the recourse they deserve and prevents law enforcement from applying the appropriate level of accountability.

The need for this modernization is evidenced by the rising frequency of non-traditional vehicle accidents. According to recent Ohio State Highway Patrol data:

There were approximately 1,043 traffic fatalities in Ohio in 2025, with a significant portion occurring on local and rural roads where under-speed vehicles are most prevalent.

According to the Legislative Service Commission's analysis, Ohio sees approximately 400 at-fault crashes annually involving 'slow-moving' or under-speed vehicles.

HB 533 ensures that the law focuses on the harm caused to the victim, rather than the mechanical classification of the vehicle used. HB 533 is a common-sense "clean-up" of our criminal code. It provides law enforcement and prosecutors with the tools necessary to protect all Ohioans, regardless of how they choose to travel. By modernizing these definitions, Ohio continues to lead in public safety and accountability.

The OACP urges your favorable consideration and passage of House Bill 533. Thank you for your time and your commitment to the safety of our communities.