

Written Testimony of the Poland Township Board of Trustees

Before the Ohio Senate Education Committee
Regarding Senate Bill 318
February 16, 2026

Chair and Members of the Committee:

Poland Township is a community built around families. Our neighborhoods, our churches, and our schools are woven together. When something affects one part of that fabric, it affects all of us.

The children who attend school within our Township — whether at Poland Local Schools or at Holy Family, a chartered nonpublic school — are our children. They live in our neighborhoods. They participate in our youth programs. Their families are part of the life of this community. Their safety is not a policy discussion for us; it is personal.

For the past two years, Poland Township has maintained a formal partnership that ensured a

consistent safety presence at Holy Family School during the school day. Our Police Department has structured its staffing and operations to accommodate that assignment. It has not been incidental — it has been intentional. The school values this relationship and has expressed its desire to continue it. Parents have come to rely on it. Students have grown accustomed to seeing a familiar and trusted presence in their hallways.

This partnership has worked because it was thoughtfully structured and locally supported.

Now, because of a legal interpretation of existing law, that agreement cannot continue beyond its current term without legislative clarification. Without Senate Bill 318, our Township will no longer have clear authority to maintain that partnership when the current agreement concludes.

As Trustees, we are entrusted with both the safety of our community and the responsible stewardship of taxpayer resources. Township government operates on limited funding provided directly by our residents. Any dedicated service must be transparent, structured, and fiscally responsible. Senate Bill 318 allows that to happen. It gives townships the ability to enter into voluntary agreements that protect children while ensuring that financial responsibilities are clearly defined.

We are not asking for mandates. We are not asking for state funding. We are simply asking for the ability to continue making responsible, local decisions that reflect the needs and values of our community.

Poland Township Board of Trustees Chairman Eric Ungaro stated, “When Resolution 25-37 was enacted, Trustee Joanne Wollet, Trustee Edward Kempers, and I, alongside Chief Greg Wilson, made a conscious decision to remove politics from the process. We are one hundred percent committed to the safety of children in our schools—public, private, and parochial alike.”

We would also like to thank Senator Al Cutrona for his support and attention to this matter.

No child’s sense of security should depend on the technical wording of a statute. Every child in Poland Township deserves to feel safe when they walk through their school doors each morning.

We respectfully ask for your support of Senate Bill 318 so that communities like ours may continue to care for their children in a way that is thoughtful, responsible, and grounded in local values.

Poland Township Board of Trustees

Mahoning County, Ohio