



Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police
Opponent Testimony – House Bill 96
Senate Finance Committee

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony on House Bill 96, the state's operating budget. On behalf of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, we applaud the collaborative work that Governor DeWine, Attorney General Yost, and the Ohio Legislature have put into the FY26-27 operating budget and appreciate your dedication to ensuring Ohio's law enforcement are equipped to uphold public safety.

We greatly appreciate the General Assembly's support for continuing professional training (CPT), especially the legislature's consistent funding for law enforcement training. This investment has been critical in ensuring every police officer in Ohio has access to important trainings that reflect evolving law changes, legal standards, and best practices in areas such as use of force, mental health crisis response, officer wellness, and more. However, in its current form, House Bill 96 prohibits university police departments from accessing these funds to ensure their officers are trained appropriately. Across the nation, we are seeing serious incidents happening at state colleges and universities. It is crucial that public university police officers are equipped with the knowledge and training to respond to rapidly evolving situations to protect our children seeking higher education. We are respectfully requesting that the Senate increase the law enforcement training line item from \$65 million to \$68 million over the biennium and remove the provision that prohibits state university police departments from receiving training reimbursements.

Additionally, OACP's membership is deeply concerned with language included in the current version of the budget that transitions the position of county coroner from elected to an appointed position. Granting appointment authority to county commissioners creates risk of political influence over the coroner's key responsibilities, including determining the cause and manner of death. To preserve the integrity of this office, we respectfully request that this provision be removed to ensure that county coroners are accountable to the citizens of Ohio rather than county government.

We sincerely appreciate your thoughtful consideration of the recommendations outlined above and hope that you will address the two concerns above in an effort to continue advancing public safety. The support of the legislature is vital to ensuring that Ohio's law enforcement agencies have the training and resources needed to serve and protect our communities effectively.