

**Testimony to the Ohio Senate Judiciary Committee  
In Support of Senate Bill 114**

Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony.

I would like to begin by expressing my sincere gratitude to Senator Patton for his leadership on Senate Bill 114. This important piece of legislation shines a long-overdue light on harmful law enforcement practices that erode community trust and undermine the morale and professionalism of our peace officers. Senator Patton, thank you for standing up for both citizens and cops with the introduction of this bill.

My name is Enrique Ortega. I proudly served as a police officer in Whitehall, Ohio, for 16 years. During my final eight years, beginning in 2016, I witnessed firsthand the destructive impact of ticket quotas on both the residents of our city and the officers tasked with protecting them.

While leadership at times tries to rebrand quotas under euphemisms like “performance objectives”—as our Chief, Mike Crispen (President of the Central Ohio Police Chiefs Association) preferred to call them—this does not change the reality. A quota by any other name is still a quota. In Whitehall, these quotas were applied specifically to traffic enforcement, pressuring officers to conduct unnecessary stops in pursuit of arbitrary numerical goals.

This practice disproportionately affects low-income residents—many of whom qualify for government assistance and cannot afford the average traffic citation of \$120.00. When they fall behind in payments, a minor infraction, such as failing to signal a turn or missing a county sticker, can spiral into a warrant for arrest. The burden is real. The consequences are unjust.

In March 2022, officers were openly challenged to issue 1,000 citations in a single month—within a city of just 5 square miles and a population of approximately 20,000 people. This is not community policing. This is policing for profit. Whitehall’s use of a Mayor’s Court, where fine revenue flows directly to the city’s coffers, only adds to ethical concern.

Quotas also damage the integrity and morale of the law enforcement profession. Officers who fall short of these arbitrary goals are subject to “counseling,” removed from ancillary assignments, and effectively punished for not generating revenue. Despite Chief Crispen’s claims that traffic numbers are not tied to discipline, the actions tell a different story. Counseling and assignment removals *are* disciplinary actions—just by another name.

What’s worse, these quotas create unhealthy competition between officers and detract them from real, proactive policing. Instead of being present in neighborhoods, building relationships, and preventing crime, officers are stuck on main roads hunting for minor violations. They are forced into a role that robs them of their purpose and saps the community’s trust in the badge.

We should be encouraging our officers to serve—not to collect. We should be rebuilding the public's trust in their protectors, not turning them into revenue agents.

In closing, quotas benefit only the balance sheets of the city. They undermine community trust, degrade officer morale, and push struggling families further into financial hardship. I strongly urge this committee to support Senate Bill 114.

Thank you again, Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Committee members and Senator Patton, for your time, leadership, and consideration of this important issue.

Respectfully submitted,

**Enrique Ortega**

Former Whitehall Police Officer