



State Senator Mark Romanchuk
Senate Bill 229 Sponsor Testimony
Ohio Senate Transportation Committee
October 22, 2025

Chairman Patton, Vice Chair Schaffer, Ranking Member Antonio, and esteemed committee members I am honored to present sponsor testimony for Senate Bill 229, legislation that holds great importance in recognizing the bravery and sacrifice of our law enforcement officers.

Senate Bill 229 establishes the "Law Enforcement Purple Heart" license plate, allowing any individual awarded the esteemed Law Enforcement Purple Heart to apply for this specialty license plate in the State of Ohio. Similar to the military Purple Heart, the Law Enforcement Purple Heart is issued to officers who are injured or disabled in the line of duty. The inspiration for this legislation comes from the courage displayed by Officer Dylan Bailey, Officer Joshua Rivers, and Lieutenant Jeromie Barnhart of the Ontario, Ohio Police Department.

These three courageous officers were the first responders to a hostage crisis on February 11, 2024. The suspect was holding a civilian at gunpoint and fired at the officers during a four-hour standoff while they attempted to rescue the hostages. Officer Dylan Bailey, a graduate of Shelby High School and a respected member of the community, was shot three times twice in his left leg and once in his right elbow while responding to a domestic violence call. In the face of adversity, Officer Bailey displayed extraordinary courage and selflessness. This bill is dedicated not only to Officer Bailey but also to the many other officers in Ohio who are injured in the line of duty and awarded the Law Enforcement Purple Heart for their commitment to serving and protecting the residents of our state.

Passing Senate Bill 229 will ensure that officers who sustain injuries in the line of duty and receive the Law Enforcement Purple Heart from an organization or local police department are recognized for their dedication. To apply for the Law Enforcement Purple Heart license plate, recipients will need to provide documented evidence of their award. The bill also includes clear language prohibiting anyone who is not a recipient of the Law Enforcement Purple Heart from falsely claiming to have received the award in order to obtain the license plate.

As Officer Dylan Bailey stated in his post-interview with the Richland Source, "There are good people and bad people." Today, we can be the good people who acknowledge our officers in blue for their tireless efforts in protecting and serving. The passage of Senate Bill 229 will not only honor the bravery of our officers but also remind our communities of the sacrifices made

to keep them safe. This legislation ensures that all officers who receive the “Law Enforcement Purple Heart” and wake up every day with dedication, commitment, and bravery to protect and serve, and who were injured in the line of duty, are recognized both within their profession and by the community.

In conclusion, I urge you to consider the passage of Senate Bill 229. This bill is not just about a license plate; it is about acknowledging the bravery and sacrifices of our law enforcement officers. Thank you for your time, and consideration. I am ready to address any questions you may have at this time.