



FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE OF OHIO, INC.

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Testimony on Substitute House Bill 38

Senate Judiciary Committee

January 30, 2018

Chairman Bacon and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mike Weinman and I am here today to give proponent testimony on HB 38 regarding aggravated murder and felonious assaults on first responders on behalf of the Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio, Inc. (FOP). I am a retired Columbus police officer, who currently serves as the director of government affairs for the FOP. I am proud to represent over 26,000 full-time and retired law enforcement professionals who risk their lives on a daily basis protecting our communities. The FOP of Ohio represents municipal law enforcement officers, county deputies, township officers, and officers from most state law enforcement agencies (including OSP, OIU, ODNR, BCI and others).

Data from the FBI and the Officer Down Memorial Page (ODMP) shows that attacks on law enforcement officers are an ever present reality. According to the FBI, in 2015 alone there were over 50,000 assaults on police officers reported by just 75% of the country's law enforcement agencies that provide information to the Bureau. ODMP revealed that the number of deadly ambush attacks rose 167% in 2016. Ohio is not immune from these attacks. On the night of January 17, 2016, Danville police officer Thomas Cottrell was ambushed and killed behind his police station. The killer, a multiply convicted criminal, desecrated the officer's body after the unprovoked assassination.

Law enforcement officers hold a unique place in American society. We are one of the very few government agencies that can seize your property, remove your children, place you in a mental health facility, and deprive you of your freedom through arrest. We are charged with enforcing the law upon many who refuse to be told what they can and cannot do in their lives. This makes us an enemy to criminal and anti-government elements who feel justified in hurting and/or killing officers.

HB 38 is a much needed measure in the face of growing attacks against our brothers and sisters in law enforcement. The FOP feels strongly that HB 38 will remove from society these violent criminals who have caused death or injury to law enforcement officers, and it will be an effective deterrent to future attacks.

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