

**Senate Bill 16 Sponsor Testimony**  
**Judiciary Committee**  
**February 20, 2019**

Chairman Eklund, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Thomas and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 16.

Senate Bill 16 comes as a direct result of concerns of several law enforcement officers and local groups in the Cleveland area who want to establish positive relationships throughout the community. Senate Bill 16 will increase positive interactions between police and civilians by:

- Requiring the State Board of Education to develop a model curriculum for high school students on proper interactions with police officers.
- Requiring the Department of Public Safety to include a section on police interactions in the motor vehicle laws.
- Reinforce the importance of civilian interaction training within law enforcement

This bill mirrors the Texas Community Safety Education Act, which requires school districts and charter schools to educate high school students on how to conduct themselves when stopped by the law enforcement. The act also requires Texas law enforcement to be refreshed on interactions with the driving public and utilizes instructional videos on the role of law enforcement, as well as proper behavior for both civilians and peace officers during a traffic stop.

According to data collected by the Ohio State Highway Patrol, there were 7,582,556 traffic stops in Ohio between 2013 and 2017. These stops resulted in numerous charges such as resisting arrest, failure to comply with a lawful order and obstructing official business. The current arrests and citations for obstructing official business according to the Ohio Department of Public Safety are as follows:

- 2018- 423 charges of obstruction of business
- 2013-2017- 1,882 charges of obstruction of business

Obstructing official business is defined by section 2921.31 of the Ohio Revised Code as:

No person, without privilege to do so and with purpose to prevent, obstruct, or delay the performance by a public official of any authorized act within the public official's official capacity, shall do any act that hampers or impedes a public official in the performance of the public official's lawful duties.

At times, these instances have led to unnecessary, deadly outcomes for both law enforcement and civilians. Many members of law enforcement believe that charges such as these can be avoided with increased public awareness on what to do when stopped by law enforcement.

This General Assembly recently held a moment of silence for fallen police officer Detective William Lee Brewer, who was killed in the line of duty while responding to a call from a suicidal individual. Additionally, in 2015, Samuel DuBose was fatally shot and killed by a University of Cincinnati police officer during a traffic stop for a missing front license plate and a suspended driver's license. Senate Bill 16 aims to reduce tragedies such as these by continually providing education to the community and law enforcement.

This is a bill to protect our law enforcement officers and citizens who may otherwise not know what their rights and responsibilities are when interacting with police; the goal of this legislation is to ensure police return to their families and civilians have an uneventful interaction and arrive safely at their destination.

Chairman Eklund, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Judiciary committee, thank you for your time and I ask for your favorable consideration of passage of this legislation. I will be happy to answer questions the committee might have.