



Tau Boule (Cleveland, Ohio)

March 4, 2019

Chairman John Eklund
Ohio Senate
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Eklund:

This letter is forwarded on behalf of members of Tau Boule, the Cleveland, Ohio Chapter of the **Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity** - to communicate our firm support for Senate Bill 16, which is focused on Civilian Interaction Training. Founded in 1904, Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity (also known as the Boulé) is the oldest Greek-letter organization comprised primarily of African American men. The Boulé has approximately 5,000 members throughout the United States, the Caribbean and the United Kingdom, with 50 members in Cleveland that represent academic and professional excellence in a wide spectrum of disciplines. The members care deeply about the Cleveland community and promote numerous strategies and practices that enhance education and social justice, particularly for minority communities.

We believe that Senate Bill 16 is critical legislation that can improve relationships long-term between safety officers and the general public, and we strongly support the bill's intention to incorporate best practices on proper interactions during traffic stops and other in-person encounters for peace officers as a component of their peace officer training school experience.

We also strongly support the recommended plan to engage the state board of education, in collaboration with the director of public safety, to develop a model curriculum for instruction in grades nine through twelve on proper interactions with the peace officers during traffic stops and other in-person encounters with peace officers.

In accordance with the two aforementioned sections of Senate Bill 16, we also support the director of public safety amending the digest of the motor vehicle laws, or any other reference document for the material covered in the written portions of the temporary instruction permit and drivers' license examinations to include a separate section with instruction on proper interactions when a driver is stopped by a peace officer.

It is a known fact that many of the challenges that we have faced as a state and as a nation as it pertains to peace officer/civilian interactions have stemmed from limited training, misunderstandings and lack of knowledge. Senate Bill 16 will greatly diminish these challenges, as the legislation calls for detailed training on a person's rights during an interaction with a peace officer. Some of the clarifications that this legislation will address include:

- The rights of a passenger in a vehicle who has been pulled over for a traffic stop
- Proper actions for interacting with a peace officer or civilian and methods for diffusing a stressful encounter
- When a peace officer may require a person to exit a vehicle
- Constitutional protections from illegal search and seizure
- Procedures for filing a complaint against or a compliment on behalf of a peace officer
- Demonstrations and role-play activities in a classroom setting that allow students to better understand how interactions between peace officers and civilians and should unfold

We, the members of Tau Boule (Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity) firmly believe that this bill is most deserving of affirmative vote by the Ohio Senate. We thank you for your consideration of and support for Senate Bill 16 and ask that you please keep our organization in mind for further proponent testimony and any other ways that we might be helpful.

Sincerely,

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