

# MEDINA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



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**TERRY GRICE, SHERIFF**

March 15, 2022

The Honorable Kristina Roegner, Chair  
Government Oversight and Reform Committee  
Ohio Senate – 134 General Assembly  
Columbus, OH 44315

***Re: H.B. 206 Township Police Enforce Certain Laws on the Interstate***

Dear Chair Roegner, Vice Chair McColley, and Members of the Criminal Justice Committee,

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to provide written testimony on H.B. 206. My name is Terry Grice, Sheriff of Medina County. I took office as Sheriff on January 4, 2021 and prior to that I was the Chief and Safety Director for Montville Township for 9 years. Overall I have a total 22 years of experience in law enforcement.

Medina County has two townships (Medina & Montville) with direct access to 10 miles of Interstate 71 with a population of approximately 21,000. Currently, state law prohibits these officers from enforcing vehicle-related offenses under R.C. 4513.39, on Interstate 71. H.B. 206 was introduced to allow townships with a population greater than 5,000 to have authority to enforce necessary laws to ensure safety for the motoring public.

The Ohio Supreme Court decision in *State v. Brown* provided a loophole for those found to be violating the Ohio Revised Code, and caused law enforcement operations to be severely impacted. In that specific case, the driver was found to have illegal drugs in their possession, but based on R.C. 4513.39, the case was dismissed. As I'm sure you are aware, many individuals who traffic illegal narcotics travel our interstates on a daily basis. This impact goes beyond drug offenses. Many arrests for OVI are as a result of traffic violations for which officers are not permitted to currently enforce on the interstate. Officers need to have the full resources of the Ohio Revised Code in order to perform their sworn duty.

The 50,000 resident threshold also seems excessively high. Of the 88 counties in the State, 39 counties do not meet the 50,000 resident requirement for the entire county population. There are approximately 1,215 municipalities in the State and only 15, or less than 1.5%, meet the 50,000 threshold. Of the 1,309 townships, there are only seven, less than .5%, that have a population over 50,000.

When it comes to training, Township Police Officers are trained the same and held to the same Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission standard, as any other law enforcement officer in the state.

We are living in a time when resources are extremely limited and strained, especially in the law enforcement arena. H.B. 206 will allow our local law enforcement agencies (Ohio State Highway Patrol, Sheriff's Office and Townships) to work collaboratively to provide safety and enforcement on Interstate 71. With this being said, I am asking for your consideration and support of H.B. 206. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (330) 764-3635.

Respectfully,

Terry Grice  
Sheriff

**HONESTY ★ INTEGRITY ★ LOYALTY ★ PROFESSIONALISM**