



FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE OF OHIO, INC.

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November 13, 2018

RE: SB No. 207, 132nd General Assembly, Regular Session 2017-2018

Chairman Bacon, Vice Chair Dolan, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for your time allowing the Ohio Fraternal Order of Police to address the important issue of strangulation and suffocation. The Ohio Fraternal Order of Police represents more than 25,000 active and retired police officers.

Early in our law enforcement careers—often at the police academy, we learn of the dangers in calls for service involving domestic violence or domestic disputes. Many studies on police officers killed in the line of duty show domestic violence runs are the most dangerous runs we will face in our career.

Batters pose a serious threat to the general public and law enforcement. In Nampa, Idaho, Police Chief Craig Kingsbury examined the statistical link between officer-involved shootings and subjects with a history of strangulating intimate partners. In his sample, while small, found 80% of the subjects had a history of domestic violence and 30% had a history of strangling an intimate partner.

In a similar study in California, Supervising Riverside County District Attorney Jerry Fineman examined public records for the connection between the killers of law enforcement officers and the killers' history of strangulation and domestic violence. He found 50% of the killers had a history of assaults by strangulation and all of the killers had a history of domestic violence.

Increasing penalties on these criminals will make our police officer members and our communities safer.

Many police agencies have recognized the dangers of strangulation by placing very restrictive limits on officers using chokeholds or neck restraints. Often these holds are limited by policy to the most dangerous situations, with police officers being prohibited from using chokes except in life-threatening circumstances.

Allegations of strangulation pose difficulty for police agencies and patrol officers. Often short staffed and going from run to run, patrol officers may not pursue allegations of strangulation without visible injuries. Making strangulation a felony would cause police agencies to give these types of allegations the attention they deserve.

The Ohio FOP supports Senate Bill 207 and urges its passage to address these dangerous incidents.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important subject.

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Legislative Agent

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