



FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE OF OHIO, INC.

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Senate Judiciary Committee

January 22, 2020

Testimony on Substitute House Bill 236

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Chairman Eklund, Vice-Chair Manning, Ranking Member Thomas, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Michael Weinman, director of government affairs, for the Ohio Fraternal Order of Police. Thank you for allowing me to give proponent testimony on Sub. HB 236. Today, I am testifying on behalf of more than 25,000 active and retired members of the FOP from across Ohio.

Sub. HB 236 adds a definition of hospital police officers to the felonious assault, aggravated assault, and assault statutes. By being added to these statutes, the hospital police officers will be able to have those that assault them be appropriately charged. Why is this important? A recent study of emergency room physicians found that violence in emergency departments is increasing. It is now not an uncommon occurrence that hospital police officers are forced to intercede in fights and disturbances in waiting and patient areas. Many disputes that landed the patient in the hospital in the first place are increasingly being continued in emergency departments across Ohio, dramatically increasing an already stressful situation. Eight out of ten doctors in the study say violence has harmed patient care. Doctors and nurses and technicians have become increasingly reliant on the intervention of hospital police officers to be able to treat their patients when family members, their friends, and even the patients themselves violently turn on them.

So, why does the FOP support Sub. HB 236 when the hospital police officers generally cannot become members? Because these men and women need every protection under the law that they can get. We have seen firsthand what they must handle and are sympathetic to their predicament. Therefore, the FOP is respectfully asking that Sub. HB 236 be favorably reported.