



Derek J. Robinson  
Fire Chief

**Madison Township Fire Department**  
**Franklin County, Ohio**  
**4567 Firehouse Lane**  
**Groveport, Ohio 43125**

**Sta. 181 Business Tel: (614) 837-7883 Fax: (614) 836-0716**

**Sta. 182 Business Tel: (614) 837-5149 Fax: (614) 837-5147**

**Sta. 183 Business Tel: (614) 828-8545 Fax: (614) 829-7424**

April 4, 2022

Chairman Hillyer  
Vice Chair Grendell  
Ranking Member Galonski

House Civil Justice Committee,

I am writing to share my full and robust support for HB545. This bill will allow privileged communication for Peer Supporters and First Responders and play a significant role in assisting those in need.

As a first responder for over 27 years, I understand the value this bill will serve for the men and women serving in public safety. Mental health plays an essential role in every first responder's personal and professional life. Having utilized Peer Support myself, I realize what this type of care can bring to those serving our communities.

HB 545 would enable employees to have confidential conversations with Peer Supporters as they discuss sensitive personal issues. These private interactions would build trust and confidence as the fire responder works through their problems. In addition, this bill allows for specific information to be shared should it meet any of the four criteria presented in the bill regarding the individual's or other's safety, the waiving of their confidentiality rights, providing information regarding criminal activity, or they reveal an intent to defraud or deceive an investigation.

The approval of HB 545 would extend the longevity of our first responders and allow them to engage in their organization. In addition, it will enable the first responder to feel comfortable with who they are sharing sensitive information with. For example, an employee may think that the healthcare professional they are talking with does not understand their job or the things they experience. With the passage of HB 545, they will have the ability to share with others who are knowledgeable and empathic concerning their profession. Having Peer Support also allows our first responders the ability to have quicker access to needed help, as opposed to needing to schedule appointments, gain insurance approval, etc.

Thank you for being so supportive of this bill, and please know that our first responders are grateful for your efforts in advocating for their needs and mental health.

Respectfully,

Derek Robinson, Fire Chief  
Madison Township Fire Department.