



March 31, 2022

House Bill 545
House Civil Justice Committee
Chairman Hillyer
Vice Chair Grendell
Ranking Member Galonski

Re: House Bill 545

To whom it may concern:

The Cincinnati Police Department is writing to express our support for House Bill 545 introduced by you a few weeks ago.

Research indicates law enforcement suffers from high levels of depression, anxiety and PTSD compared to the general population. Due to significant stigma around mental health, many first responders delay or avoid seeking treatment, resulting in difficulties personally and professionally. Wellness efforts within law enforcement agencies, such as embedded peer support systems, are integral to the work of breaking down cultural barriers, raising mental health awareness, reducing mental illness and ensuring officers have access to evidence-based mental health treatment programs.

This legislation provides statewide structure for successful peer training, eliminates barriers agencies face when integrating wellness into their departments, and provides confidentiality protections critical to successful mental health support in law enforcement culture. House Bill 545 will ensure we may better address wellness with first responders, so first responders are better able to serve our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "T. Theetge".

Lieutenant Colonel Teresa A. Theetge
Cincinnati Police Department
Interim Police Chief