



Brian Baldrige
State Representative, 90th House District

Sponsor Testimony
Ohio House Commerce and Labor Committee
House Bill 158

Chair Stein, Vice-Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity to stand before you today to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 158. This is a reintroduction of my HB 328 that passed out of this committee and this chamber unanimously last General Assembly. This bill is designed to revise current statute to increase safety for our firefighters who are going through training.

Many on this committee may have heard the term PFAS, the potentially harmful substance that have been the subject of some intense scrutiny over the past few years. PFAS is a combination of certain chemical compounds that can greatly assist in the extinguishing of certain fires, specifically those ignited by liquid fuels. However, the continued use of and exposure to firefighting foams that contain PFAS chemicals has revealed possible links to multiple adverse effects on a person's health, including but not limited to cancer.

When a firefighter is undergoing training, a number of different materials are used to showcase which foam is the most effective when combating certain fires, including those containing PFAS. Since training is the setting in which a firefighter will be most exposed to PFAS, this legislation will prohibit the use of foam that contains PFAS for training purposes unless required by law, regulation, or ordinance, and the testing facility has implemented appropriate containment, treatment, and disposal measures to prevent releases of the foam into the environment.

This legislation does contain certain exemptions for the use of a foam that contains PFAS. The first exemption is the use of the chemical in emergency situations. The second is the use of the chemical in testing facilities when the appropriate containment, treatment, and disposal measures are in place. The third would be the indication that this legislation does not restrict the manufacture, sale, or distribution of a foam that contains PFAS.

This legislation is a responsive and responsible approach to increase the safety of our brave men and women who risk their safety to protect our own. By banning the use of PFAS



foam in a training setting, we are choosing to prioritize the health of our citizens and that of our environment as well.

Chair Stein, Vice-Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity to stand before you today.