

Committees:

Higher Education, *Ranking Member*
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Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 386.

Today, only 15 of America’s largest police departments have a strict residency requirement for police officers, and a majority of cops live outside the cities they serve. This statistic is intimately tied to the diversity of the police force: Black and Hispanic officers are considerably more likely to reside in the cities they police than white ones.

Police and Firefighters take an oath to serve and protect our communities and what better way to do this than to be a part of the neighborhood.

House Bill 386 fosters a stronger community by allowing for communities to require their police and fire chiefs to live within the municipality. This requirement would then assure a closer relationship between the fire and police chief with their respective departments. Furthermore H.B. 386 would promote a quicker communication between leadership and departments.

It important that we give municipalities’ greater control over whether they require for their police and fire chiefs to live within their area of responsibility to promote better communication and cut down on excess transportation cost. By allowing for municipal corporations to require that their fire and police chiefs live within the corporation, we help them promote cohesion, accessibility, and trust within their community.

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the State and Local Government Committee, I thank you for your time, and will be happy to answer any questions