

March 14, 2022

The Honorable Kristina D. Roegner, Chair  
Government Oversight and Reform Committee

RE: H. B. 206 Proponent Testimony

Members of the Government Oversight and Reform Committee,

I come to you today to give testimony on HB 206 and to further ask for your support for this important legislation. I have served in every level of law enforcement in Wood Co. with the exception of being an Ohio State Highway Patrol Trooper. I began my public service in 1981 and a volunteer firefighter and EMT in Perrysburg Twp., went on to serve as a police officer in that township, the Village of Pemberville, the City of Perrysburg, Chief Deputy of the Wood Co. Sheriff's Office, and am currently the Administrator/Chief of Police in Lake Township. I have held this position since 2004. I have also served as an elected council person in the City of Perrysburg, chairing the service-safety and personnel committees. Following are my thoughts on HB 206, Township Policing Interstates:

1. Lake Township has 6 miles of I-280 in its jurisdiction, 4 exits, 6 crossovers. There are multiple businesses, residents, schools, and industry within ½ mile of each exit.
2. There are 9 truck stops serving the interstate.
3. Exit 71 (I280/80-90) is the second busiest interchange on the turnpike.
4. There are 2 incorporated villages adjacent to the exits, all within the township.
5. I280 traffic was such a concern, a Highway Patrol Post was built to service it, the Post has since moved to Bowling Green, taking its Troopers with it.
6. The road literally cuts Lake Township in half, we use it daily to traverse the Township, yet we cannot fully patrol it.
7. There are other townships in a similar situation throughout the state.
8. It is our solemn duty and obligation to enforce all laws in our respective townships.

I think most people focus on drug and human trafficking as well as revenue enhancement for the township's when they initially hear about this bill, the reality is far more grounded in basic public safety. Human trafficking and drug operations as well as the related offenses have and will remain a core focus of our criminal operations, they must. Many, if not most times the discovery of these major crimes starts with a traffic offense stop, and further investigation reveals the true nature of the issue. Right now we are hamstrung from trying to have an impact on the human trafficking trade, with Northwest Ohio being identified as a hub for such activity.

Townships in Ohio have traditionally never received the bulk of fine money from traffic enforcement, and never will. A township officer enforcing traffic is purely for the sake of public safety, not revenue

enhancement, period. Lake Township will never have the manpower or desire to set up “speed traps”, it is not a revenue stream, and our elected officials and constituents would never stand for it, as they shouldn’t. We do however need the ability to perform all aspects of our sworn obligation, traffic enforcement included, on all roadways that travel through our township. We need the knowledge that we have full jurisdiction and support when we are on the interstate, be it changing a motorists tire, providing emergency traffic support for our fire and EMS responders, traversing the township, checking on a traffic issue or complaint, responding to a disabled or ill motorist, and all other matters we are requested to attend to. It is these daily items that fly under the radar, but are very important in our daily lives.

In Ohio township police officers have the exact same training, qualifications, and requirements as every other police officer or deputy sheriff in the state. All we are asking is that have the same authority on all roadways that travel through our townships. We swear an oath to uphold the law, please give us the opportunity to uphold all the laws within our jurisdiction.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Mark Hummer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

E. Mark Hummer  
Administrator/Chief of Police  
Lake Township, Wood County, Ohio