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House Homeland Security Committee

June 14, 2023

Testimony on House Bill 167

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Chair Ghanbari, Vice-Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the committee,

I am Mike Weinman, a retired Columbus police officer who serves as director of government affairs for the FOP. Thank you for allowing me to testify on behalf of the 23,000 FOP members from every corner of Ohio to give proponent testimony on HB 167.

The FOP is a strong advocate for police training. We supported the additional training for police chiefs when it was first discussed, and we support HB 167 now. When you attend a basic peace officer training academy in Ohio, they don't teach you about budgets. Why would they? Budgets and the other topics taught to chiefs aren't typically needed until you rise in rank. And that's where HB 167 comes in. OPOTC can establish supervisor training for sergeants and above. HB 167 also makes needed modifications to the current police chief training.

HB 167 exempts law enforcement officers who have previously served as chief of police in a full-time capacity from having to attend. The bill allows the course to be offered outside of OPOTA, which is beneficial because OPOTA no longer provides lodging, and the hotel offerings in London are scant. This change could save local governments money by removing the need for meals and lodging if the course is offered closer to the home of the attending chief. The bill also allows a chief to provide proof of having training that matches the OPOTA lesson, and once that proof is accepted, they can opt out of eight hours of the training.

I tapped Jay McDonald, the chair of our Legislative Committee, for this testimony. Jay went through the chief training not long ago and found the training beneficial. He wrote, "There were people in my class who had zero budgeting experience, zero public records training, zero public relations training, and zero ethics training." For this reason, the FOP supports HB167.