



Ohio House Pension Committee
HB 296, Interested Party Written Testimony
Roy Hollenbacher, Lima Fire Department, IAFF Local 334
December 12, 2023

Chairman Mathews, Vice Chair King, Ranking Member Lightbody, and members of the House Pensions Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony as an Interested Party for House Bill 296. My name is Roy Hollenbacher and I am currently the Retiree Vice President of Ohio Association of Professional Fire Fighters and retired from Lima Fire Department, IAFF Local 334 in 2000.

My Story

Drafted Into The US Army

I graduated High school in 1968 and was drafted into the US Army on August 5, 1969. I served 1 year 9 months (I received an early out for seasonal employment with the Allen County Engineer's Office). I was discharged with the rank of Specialist 5th class (Spec 5).

Fire Fighting Is A Family Affair

My father was a Lima firefighter from 1941 - 1963 and my brother was a Lima firefighter from 1966 - 1998. I was working for the Allen County Engineer's office and a test to become a Lima firefighter was published. I looked up to my dad and brother – their commitment to the community through firefighting. So I took the test and was hired. Best decision of my life!

I was hired December 21, 1971, to the Lima Fire Department – it was the only department I ever worked. I purchased 21 months of military time and retired with 30 years, 4 months of service. I retired on a cardiac presumptive disability pension July 5, 2000.

Pension Became Important To Me

I was 21 when I was hired as a Lima firefighter; needing a pension was the furthest thing from my mind. I was a thrill seeker and liked the idea of giving back to my community. It wasn't until I got into the career did, I realize the importance of our pensions. This is a hard job – both physically and mentally. Its not for everyone. The pension let me retire with dignity. I had no choice but to retire cardiac presumptive disability pension July 5, 2000.

Giving Back To The Community

I served as a Bath Township (Allen County) Trustee for 20 years. I also served on the Ohio Association Board of Directors for 8 years, I have currently been in my position as First District Vice President since October 1999. Prior to being elected District VP, I served as the OAPFF First District Work Comp and Pension Rep. I have a working and historical knowledge of the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund for nearly 35 years.

I respectfully request you to vote in favor of HB 296.