



OHIO HOUSE PASSES HB 296

Pension bill heads to the Senate!

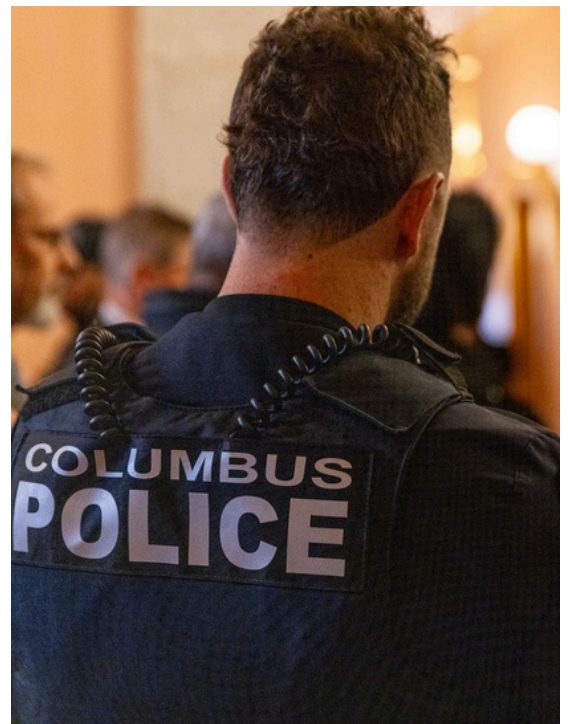
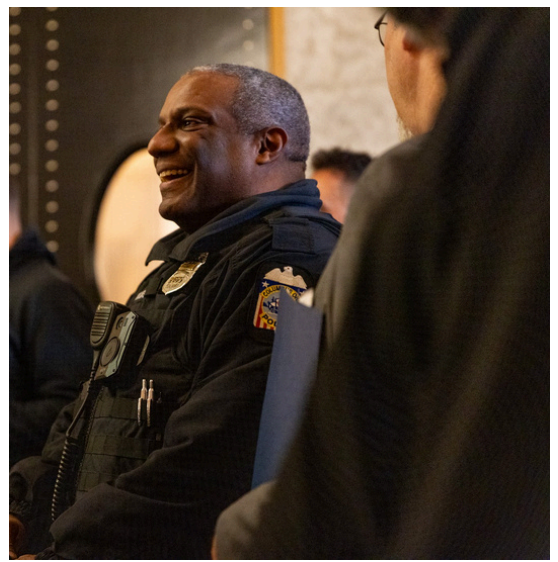


The Ohio House passed our pension bill, House Bill 296, on December 4th by a vote of 66 to 25. The photo shows who voted in favor (in green), who voted against (in red) and who did not vote (in yellow.)

We are now onto the Senate and we need everyone to call and email their State Senator. It could not be more important, in fact....call every State Senator and ask them to get HB 296 on the floor of the Senate and ask them to vote YES!

Thanks to the members who joined us at the Statehouse to help us pass this bill!







Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio | 222 E. Town Street | Columbus | Ohio | 43215

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jay McDonald

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FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE OF OHIO APPLAUDS OHIO HOUSE FOR COMMON SENSE PENSION REFORM VOTE

COLUMBUS (12/5/24)— The more than 23,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police today applauded the Ohio House's bipartisan vote in favor of pension reform. They encouraged the Ohio Senate to take up the bill and complete it before the end of the lame duck session.

On Wednesday, the Ohio House voted to adopt HB 296, the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Modernization Act. The bill creates parity in the percentage that municipalities contribute to police and firefighters' pensions by phasing in an increase for police over six years. It also increases the amount the first responders pay.

This would be the first increase for municipalities in nearly 40 years, while active and retired police officers and firefighters have endured 3.2 **BILLION** dollars in increased costs and eliminated pension benefits since 2013.

The president of the Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio, Jay McDonald, was happy to see the vote as a commitment to first responders.

"This legislation has taken almost four years even to get a vote on the house floor, so we were thrilled to see the house take action," McDonald said. "It was a bipartisan vote on common sense legislation, which we need more of – and I thank the Ohio Police and Fire Pension fund for leading the way."

The bill now heads to the Senate, where the members of the FOP and the Ohio Association of Professional Fire Fighters expect further action before the end of the lame duck session.

"The statements I've seen about an uphill battle in the Senate don't mesh with our conversations," McDonald continued. "We've had productive talks and believe there is also overwhelming bipartisan support there to get this done now."

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We still need your calls on Social Security



We cannot allow our momentum to cool, we are too close to the finish line to stop working. Please call Senators Sherrod Brown and JD Vance and tell them to work to get our Social Security Fairness Act to the floor with a clean vote.

Then, call Leaders Chuck Schumer and Mitch McConnell and ask for the same thing, a clean vote on the bill. There is enough time for political shenanigans with other bills. This bill is too important for that!

Qualified Immunity Under Attack

After nine attempts and intervention by the courts, the group trying to place an amendment into the Ohio Constitution to eliminate qualified immunity for all government employees (including law enforcement) and jurisdictions has been accepted by the Attorney General. The Ohio Ballot Board certified that this issue is a single topic and therefore 1 issue on the ballot, if it gets that far. The groups advocating for the elimination of qualified immunity will have to collect about 413,000 valid signatures in 44 of the 88 counties to get on the ballot.

This proposal impacts all governmental employees and some employees who are somewhat connected to the government. It is wide reaching and very broad.

It is an uphill battle for the group attempting this, as they have few political allies. The other unions are not supporting this, the political parties are not supporting this, we just came off a hugely expensive political season and we are about to have another extremely expensive political cycle with the statewide races and a US Senate race in 2026.

We are rightly concerned about this, but we are also prepared if needed. The members have been building a "war chest" since Senate Bill 5 and we will have those funds available if we need to use them to defend our members and our profession. We would follow the same blueprint we used in SB 5: build coalitions, engage experts and work our tails off to defeat this. We will keep watching and we will keep you updated.

FOP of Ohio supports North Carolina FOP

Did you know that the FOP of Ohio Foundation donated \$2500 to the North Carolina FOP after Hurricane Helene? Did you know that FOP of Ohio members went to North Carolina to cook for first responders and soldiers in the aftermath of that historic storm? Did you know that the leadership of our State Lodge was in constant contact with the leadership of the North Carolina FOP about what they needed and how we could help?

Did you know that the West Chester Township PD and West Chester FOP Lodge 186 donated 5 cruisers to the Old Fort Police Department; Montreat Police Department; Spruce Pine Police Department; and the Black Mountain Police Department?

The bonds of fraternalism within the FOP extend far outside the borders of our great state. We have also helped the South Carolina FOP, the Georgia FOP, the Florida FOP and the Tennessee FOP. We also assisted an Ohio FOP member who lives in Florida who was severely impacted by this devastating storm.

We are able to help these causes and so many others in our state because of your support for our Foundation. You can donate online here:

<https://unionly.io/o/fopohfoundation/fopohfoundation>.



*FOP Lodge 186
West Chester, Ohio*



*FOP Lodge 186
West Chester, Ohio*

Is your Local Lodge Bonded?

The National Constitution and Bylaws in ARTICLE 19 State and Subordinate Lodges Section 1 says the following: Each state lodge of the Order shall maintain a bond or insurance in respect to the fidelity of those officers or members having access to or control over the funds of the lodge. Each subordinate lodge shall provide proof of such bond or insurance to the state lodge with which it is affiliated, and each state lodge shall provide proof of such bond or insurance to the National Fraternal Order of Police. No state or subordinate lodge shall be eligible for financial aid or assistance from another lodge or the National Fraternal Order of Police except upon proof of maintenance of such bond or insurance.

You can purchase fidelity bonding from the National FOP provider at <https://hylant.com/solutions/personal/fraternal-order-of-police/fidelity> or through many local insurance agencies.

Do not be a FOP Lodge that loses its members money due to fraud because you are not insured for that. It is inexpensive and it is required.

Ex-McKeesport detective charged with stealing \$1 million from police union

Former Kentucky police union official under investigation for stealing \$50k from FOP lodge

Montgomery County Deputy sentenced for theft from FOP Lodge

FORMER TULSA FOP TREASURER CHARGED WITH STEALING NEARLY HALF MILLION DOLLARS

FOP of Ohio Legislative Report

Mike Weinman - Director of
Governmental Affairs



We are in Lane Duck, and some bills are getting much attention. A standing rule in the House and Senate is that every bill will get at least one hearing. So, dormant bills are now receiving hearings as the legislative session ends on December 31st. In keeping with the holiday spirit, some bills become Christmas trees. What does that mean? A bill that has passed one chamber gets other bills amended into it in the other chamber. So, we have to monitor these amendments because they could have been bills the FOP opposed or supported. Now they are moving because they have become part of another bill. Bills aren't the only things getting amended into these Christmas trees. Straight amendments are going into bills that are being passed. These need monitoring and input as well.

The FOP has been working on an amendment that expands the jurisdiction of regional transit authority officers. SB 100 will be amended to add to the definition of "transit facility" to include paratransit vehicles, railcars, transit zones, bus loops, bus layover areas, transit centers, bus stops, bus shelters, rail stations, rail lines, and vehicles for maintenance and support. The amendment allows RTA officers to act in areas adjacent to transit facilities. If a DV occurs on the sidewalk next to a bus stop, RTA officers will now be allowed to act if the bill passes. RTA officers will also be permitted to assist other law enforcement agencies. The FOP was notified of this amendment through FOP members and OLC staffer Otto Holm. We contacted House Criminal Justice Committee Chairwoman Rep. Cindy Abrams, who updated us and shared any changes, always asking if we approved them. We are not always informed of amendments, which necessitate a team approach and gathering information from our friends and allies. This is something that is even more important during lame duck season.

Did you know that the FOP in Ohio has a statewide lodge for members who do not have a local lodge to belong to? We call it the Buckeye Lodge and it is open to qualified members who do not have a local lodge in their area. These members can get legal defense and every other benefit that the State and National FOP provide.

If you know someone who fits this criteria, please send them our way to join the Buckeye Lodge! Contact Rob Hawley at rhawley@fopohio.org.



FOP of Ohio Pushes out App

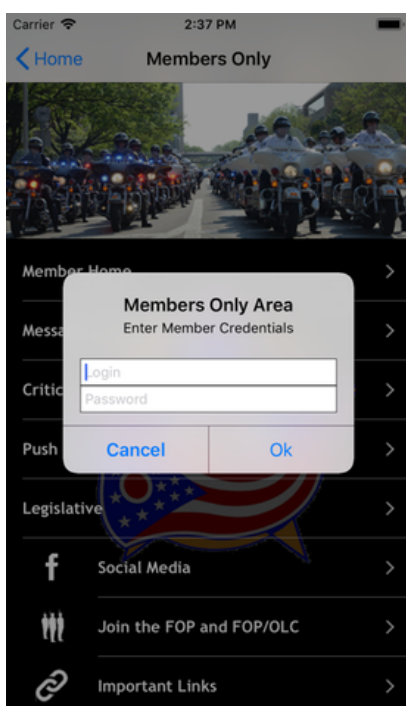
We have quite a lot going on at the State Lodge. We have hit the ground running and have been working hard. One of our ongoing initiatives is to ensure that we are getting information out to the membership in as real time as possible. Several of these initiatives will be better served with your participation.

If you have not already done so, we are asking each FOP member from Ohio to please go to www.fopohio.org and create an account. This is a fairly simple process and does not take up a lot of time. Once you have your account created, please go to your Apple or Google Play Store on your phone and download the app titled "FOP Ohio":

Once you install the app and sign in, your smartphone app will be linked to the FOP of Ohio website.

Creating your account will not only allow us to send you important information on a real time basis but it also helps to solve our ongoing issue about keeping up-to-date contact information (member's email address and phone #) on file with the state lodge.

Please push this out to all of your members and encourage them to create their account. Keeping our members as informed as possible does nothing but benefit our organization."



RETIREMENT DOESN'T MEAN STEPPING AWAY FROM THE BROTHERHOOD.

**JOIN THE NATION'S LARGEST POLICE
ORGANIZATION.**



**To all retired law enforcement members, we are proud to offer
our concealed carry legal protection through the FOP Legal
Defense Fund for only \$75 a year! You can learn more at
<https://foplegal.com/>.**

**We also offer exclusive access to the Thin Blue Line Healthcare,
amongst many other benefits of membership. You can learn
more at <https://thinbluelinebenefits.com/>**

**If you know a retired law enforcement who is interested in
joining the nation's Largest Police Organization contact Rob
Hawley at rhawley@fopohio.org.**



FOP Members can join the FOP Amazon Business account and take advantage of Business Prime (Free Same Day, Next Day, 2-Day shipping on Prime eligible items), wide product selection (100s of millions of products), and competitive prices (Business-only prices). Amazon Business is not intended to be used for personal purchases, and includes access to LEO relevant supplies, tactical gear, PPE, and accessories on the First Responder Storefront. Only FOP members can join. Go to <https://fop.net/benefit/amazon-business/> to find more information including a form to validate membership and receive an invite. There is also a video there to learn more information.



At the FOP, we want to ensure that our members have access to the tools and technology they need to stay safe and secure. That's why we've collaborated with FirstNet—America's public safety wireless communications platform—to provide our members with a valuable resource and service. Learn more at: <https://fop.net/benefit/firstnet-built-with-att/>



AMERILIFE® | Blue Chip Benefits
BENEFITS

Liberty Mutual.
INSURANCE

**These benefits and many more can be found
at <https://fop.net/member-benefits/>**

Important Dates

January 24-25, 2025	Ohio FOP Board Meeting	Columbus
February 11-12, 2025	Labor Summit	Las Vegas
February 17-18, 2025	Wellness Summit	Nashville
February 19-22, 2025	Leadership Matters	Nashville
March 13-15, 2025	NFOP Board Meeting	Salt Lake City
May 1, 2025	Ohio Law Enforcement Memorial	London
May 2-3, 2025	Ohio FOP Board Meeting	Canton
May 13-15, 2025	Police Week	Washington D.C.
July 13-15, 2025	Ohio FOP State Conference	Cincinnati

Ohio Police

