



**Senate General Government and Agency Review Committee
HB 308 Opposition Testimony
County Commissioners Association of Ohio, Ohio Municipal League & Ohio
Township Association
June 3, 2020**

Chairman Schuring, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member O'Brien, and members of the Senate General Government and Agency Review Committee:

The County Commissioners Association of Ohio, the Ohio Municipal League and the Ohio Township Association, on behalf of our members, write in opposition to House Bill 308, which would allow peace officers, firefighters, and emergency medical workers to become eligible for workers' compensation benefits once they have been diagnosed with work-related post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) regardless of whether the person suffers an accompanying physical injury.

This provision is a drastic departure from both current and past state law. HB 308 not only expands PTSD coverage to those cases not related to physical injury, but also marks a significant change to the types of claims eligible under Ohio's workers' compensation law. Our members have concerns about the unknown cost implications of this policy change and the potential for a significant increase in claims.

As currently written, the language in HB 308 does not include certain parameters around the coverage that have been considered in the past, such as if claims must be tied to an identifiable single incident and a time limit for compensation and benefits. Such guardrails may be appropriate. The introduced version of HB 308 included a one year time limit on compensation and benefits, but this limit was removed during the House committee process.

Our members are also concerned about singling out PTSD. Selecting one mental condition to the exclusion of all others – much like selecting only a few occupations – will undoubtedly provoke fairness arguments and equal protection challenges in future legislative or judicial actions.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.