



**Sunset Review Committee Testimony
State Fire Council**

May 21, 2024

Chairman Wilkin and members of the Sunset Review Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present information to you on the State Fire Council. My name is Tim Thompson and I am Division Counsel for the Division of State Fire Marshal at the Ohio Department of Commerce.

A principal responsibility of the State Fire Council is, upon a vacancy in the position, to conduct the first stage of the candidate selection process for the appointment of a State Fire Marshal. The second stage of the process results in the appointment of the State Fire Marshal by the Director of Commerce.

In addition, the State Fire Council may (1) conduct research, make and publish reports on fire safety, and recommend to the governor, the general assembly, the board of building standards, and other state agencies, any needed changes in the laws, rules, or administrative policies relating to fire safety; (2) recommend revisions in the rules included in the state fire code adopted by the fire marshal; and (3) maintain the Ohio Fire Service Hall of Fame.

The Council itself is made up of ten voting members: three representatives of the Ohio's fire service, two representatives of municipal governments, one member of the public and representatives from Ohio's petroleum, insurance, business and construction industries. Three additional members (the State Fire Marshal or Chief Deputy State Fire Marshal, a representative designated by the Department of Public Safety, and a representative designated by the Board of Building Standards) are ex-officio members.

Members of the Council, except ex-officio members, are compensated a fixed amount according to R.C. 124.15(J), in addition to receiving actual and necessary expenses. Approximately \$125 was paid last year for these expenses.

The Council is required to meet at least once every two months and may meet at any other time at the call of the Chair. Special sessions may be called if there is a vacancy in the office of the State Fire Marshal.

The Council has no permanent administrative or support staff; however, the State Fire Marshal does provide office space, meeting rooms, staff and clerical assistance for the Council to perform its duties. Approximately 100 staff hours each year are dedicated to assisting the Council. Furthermore, the Council does not have a dedicated budget, and council activities are funded through the Division of State Fire Marshal's budget.

In closing, the Department of Commerce respectfully requests that the State Fire Council be reauthorized. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to present information on the council, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.