

Media Contact: Jay McDonald

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FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE OF OHIO CELEBRATES SUPREME COURT VICTORY PROTECTING OFFICERS UNDER MARSY'S LAW

COLUMBUS, OH – The Ohio Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) enthusiastically applauded today's Ohio Supreme Court decision affirming that Marsy's Law protections for crime victims fully apply to law enforcement officers.

The case, brought against the City of Columbus by *The Columbus Dispatch*, centered on whether police officers can be recognized as crime victims when attacked in the line of duty. In a decisive majority opinion authored by Justice Patrick DeWine, the Court rejected the media's argument that officers "can never be victims" simply because they are on duty, calling that interpretation unsupported and inconsistent with the Constitution's plain language.

FOP of Ohio President Jay McDonald praised the ruling as a major win for officers across the state.

"This ruling is a bright light for common sense – of course, Marsy's Law protects police," McDonald said. "When an officer is attacked, they are a victim like anyone else, and they deserve the same privacy and protections. Today's decision reinforces what Ohio voters intended."

Marsy's Law, added to the Ohio Constitution in 2017, protects the names, faces, and identifying information of crime victims when public records are released. Justice DeWine's opinion made that point unmistakably clear, writing that police "easily fall within [Marsy's Law's] scope... Because police officers are persons against whom crimes can be committed, they can be victims."

The Court's decision marks a significant step forward for officer safety. It confirms that when an officer is the victim of a violent crime, their identity must be protected in public records – including video – and the media cannot obtain footage that would reveal the officer's identity.

McDonald concluded, "Ohio's officers put everything on the line to protect our communities. We're grateful the Supreme Court reinforced the Constitution's clarity and upheld essential protections for all crime victims – including the men and women who wear the badge."

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