



Senator Tom Patton
24th Ohio Senate District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PATTON PROPOSES CHANGES TO MAYOR'S COURT REQUIREMENTS

Linndale's traffic enforcement will see changes if enacted



Senator Patton testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday

COLUMBUS – State Senator Tom Patton (R – Strongsville) offered sponsor testimony today on a bill that could result in major changes to traffic enforcement procedures along I-71 in the Village of Linndale. Patton spoke before the Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday afternoon.

Senate Bill 254 will increase the population that is required in order for a municipal corporation to hold a mayor's court. Ohio law currently requires a community to have more than 100 residents, but under the proposed law that number will grow to more than 200.

The stretch of I-71 running through the Village of Linndale has been dubbed a "speed trap" by many and the village's mayor's court has proven to be a dominant revenue stream for the community. Penalties collected through traffic tickets and court fines account for \$800,000 of its annual one million dollar budget. While this highly valued revenue stream allows Linndale to

maintain roughly one police officer for every twelve residents, some law enforcement personnel in the community earn as low as \$7.40 per hour.

The Village of Linndale has become a topic of much discussion over recent months when it saw its population grow 53 percent, from 117 residents to 179. Community leaders had previously voiced concern over the prospect of seeing their population drop below 100, which would effectively do away with the mayor's court.

"Police officers are meant to protect and serve the citizenry," Patton said. "But Linndale seems content to use theirs as ad hoc toll collectors. It's unfair to the officers, as well as the people who travel I-71 to work each day. In the end, there's no real defense of having fines and tickets add up to eighty-percent of your annual budget."

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Senator Tom Patton represents Ohio's 24th Senate District, which contains a portion of Cuyahoga County. He currently serves as the Majority Floor Leader and Chairman of the Senate Highways and Transportation Committee.