



Governor Mike DeWine
Riffe Center, 30th Floor
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Governor DeWine,

As the City of Akron continues to mourn the loss of Jayland Walker, who was fatally shot by the police on June 27, we write to urge you to allocate funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to purchase dash and body cameras for the Akron Police Department.

Since taking office in 2019, your administration has been committed to supporting the needs of first responders, including by investing in new tools and technology for law enforcement. On June 17, 2020, you and Attorney General Dave Yost announced directives and proposed legislative reforms aimed at making meaningful improvements to law enforcement training, transparency, and accountability. Then, on December 6, 2021, you outlined a new proposal to invest \$250 million in ARPA funds to state and local first responder agencies to counter increases in violent crime and mitigate impacts to staffing levels and first responder wellness caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. We have a great opportunity to achieve those objectives. Unfortunately, any initiatives to support first responders and protect Ohioans from violence have been stalled.

Our community has been grief-stricken over the past two weeks. In order to mend police-community relations, it is imperative that we increase transparency and accountability. We must ensure peace officers have the tools, technology and resources needed to safely protect our communities. Currently, the Akron Police Department does not have an adequate inventory of dash and body cameras. We believe funding for these essential technological upgrades is needed to ensure transparency and hopefully prevent tragic events like the killing of Mr. Walker.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of this request to keep our communities safer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vernon Sykes", with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

State Senator Vernon Sykes
Senate District 28

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emilia Sykes", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

State Representative Emilia Sykes
House District 34

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tavia Galonski", with a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

State Representative Tavia Galonski
House District 35