

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and committee members.

My Name is Montgomery Nye, I am here today representing Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union its 5000 members. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify before you today.

I am here today to speak in support of HB 4160

One of the positions I hold within the MPFFU is that I am the Liaison between our union and the Muscular Dystrophy Association. I help to coordinate the efforts in our fund raising campaign known as Fill The Boot. Each year our members grab their fire boots and enter the streets across the state and engage in this fund raising campaign. In the last 10 years we have raised over 3.4 million dollars for MDA patient's right here in Michigan. Last year our fire fighters raised just over \$185,000 for the MDA to use in their battle of more than 40 neuromuscular diseases. While \$185,000 seems like a lot it's approximately half of the amount raised in previous years. I believe this reduction is in great part due to the current opinion of the Attorney General. The Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union is the largest single donor for the MDA in Michigan. The Muscular Dystrophy Association does not receive any government funding and relies solely on contributions by organizations like the MPFFU. As successful as our Fill The Boot program is, the cost for research, vaccinations, support groups for patients and families and summer camp for the kids suffering from different neuromuscular diseases continues to climb.

Mr. Chairman, we have locals out there that want to participate in the Fill The Boot but are unable to due to current local and state restrictions keeping them from entering the streets. I believe that this bill would allow more of our members to help those in need.

I have been involved in our Fill The Boot campaign for more than 18 years. Our members are instructed annually on how to perform a safe and efficient fund raising campaign. We require that all those participating are at least 18 years of age, we wear the appropriate ANSI approved vests and equipment required by OSHA to work in and around moving traffic. Traffic cones and warning signage are displayed and we have a \$5,000,000 insurance policy to cover those involved in the fund raising efforts.

2017 is the Sixty Third Anniversary of the partnership between the International Association of Fire Fighters, The Muscular Dystrophy Association and our Fill The Boot campaign. In the street fund raising is not new. Many states have similar legislation allowing for this type of activity, Florida, California, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona to name a few.

I would urge you to support this bill. It will allow more of our members to assist the Muscular Dystrophy Association, and to help them meet the increased demands placed on them for research and support of those suffering from neuromuscular disease.

I am available to answer any questions you may have. Thank you again for allowing me to speak and for your consideration of this bill.