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Ohio Third Frontier Commission Advisory Board

Ohio Latino Affairs Commission

State Representative Rick Perales
Ohio's 73rd House District: Western Portion of Greene County

Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security Committee
House Bill 158 Sponsor Testimony
Representatives Rep. Rick Perales and Hearcel F. Craig
Unemployment Compensation for Military Spouses
May 17th, 2017

Chair Johnson, Vice Chair Lanese, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the committee. I thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of HB 158.

This bill will provide unemployment compensation for the spouse of a military member that is subject to military transfer. Military members face a large number of challenges in pursuit of protecting the freedoms and liberties of all Americans, and their families also have to make substantial adjustments upon news of transfer.

As a part of their service, military members are subject to being transferred to military bases located around the world. A move for a military family often means selling their current home, buying one at the new location, transferring schools, finding a new church, changing doctors and dentists.

All this is to say that moving is a monumental task that a military member can be ordered to do multiple times over the course of their career. Let's make their task a little easier for them by providing a helping hand while they adjust to a new home.

The last thing we want to do is send a message to military families that Ohio is insensitive to their situation and unappreciative of their sacrifice. 46 states have already taken this opportunity to express their gratitude, and make things a little less taxing on those who are serving their country by giving them a helping hand.

This bill would make the spouse eligible for compensation for 6 months, which is the same benefit that any eligible, unemployed Ohioan would receive. According to an LSC Fiscal Analysis, it is anticipated to cost between \$100,000 and \$200,000 per year, and the maximum projected figure for military spouses who would enroll a year is 44. This number would be miniscule compared to nearly 60,000 claimants already in Ohio.

I think we all understand veterans make Ohio a better place. They bring strong community values, as well as useful, marketable skills that contribute greatly to our economy. Our goal should be to bring veterans here and keep them here. Legislation of this nature will show military families that Ohio appreciates their service and their sacrifice, and that we welcome them to our state with open arms.

Chair Johnson, Vice Chair Lanese, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the committee. I again thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of HB 158 and would be glad to answer any questions you have.