

**Amanda Wright Lane**

**Proponent Testimony – 12/5/2017**

**HB 370 - House State and Local Government Committee**

Chairman Anielski, members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to be here with you today.

In the winter of 1948 my grandfather, Milton Wright, spoke to a huge crowd of dignitaries at the Smithsonian Institution on the occasion of the presentation to the museum of the Wright Brothers' 1903 Flyer, the world's first man-carrying, powered, controllable, heavier than air flying machine. As the family's most senior member, "Pappy" had the honor of making the gift to the nation on behalf of our entire family.

And as a part his speech, Pappy talked about Orville and Wilbur Wright as uncles from his perspective when he was a boy. He told the crowd, he had formulated two absolutes in his young mind about his favorite babysitters, Uncle Orv and Uncle Will. The first certainty was that he was "convinced that all uncles were bicycle makers", because that was the reality he knew. And the second certainty Pappy proudly proclaimed was that "all bicycle makers worked on flying machines at the back of their shops", because that was the reality he knew.

There is an innocence to that revelation or declaration, an air of commonplace and the ordinary...well, of course, that's "what the Wright Brothers did"! But the truth is what happened in the back of the bicycle shop at 1127 West Third Street, Dayton, Ohio, in the early 1900's was anything but commonplace. What happened in that shop shook the world and launched mankind on an adventure we have yet to see the end of, human flight. In the history of man, we have gone from fire to wheels to wings, and those wings were imagined, designed, built, and tested in our great State. Two young Ohioans took our latest great leap for civilization.

I would argue strongly that we should add the Wright Flyer to our great State of Ohio's seal, and set ourselves apart as Ohioans again. The rays of a glowing sun, sheaves of grain, and a quiet river could represent just about any state in the union. When you google the Ohio History Connection, the description of our seal begins with the words "Our seal illustrates a diverse geography".... Orville and Wilbur Wright made it possible to see that geography from above. Heck, they made it possible for us to see all 50 states' "diverse geography" from above. That is truly exceptional, truly extraordinary, and truly representative of the heart and genius of Ohioans.

To say Ohioans have a pioneering spirit, again, really doesn't set us apart from other states either, we are a country built by pioneers. But to proclaim we were the first, THE FIRST, to lead our nation to a new frontier in the skies is an accomplishment worth celebrating and

claiming for all time. There have been many bicycle makers throughout the annals history, many uncles that acted as babysitters too, but only two of them invented the airplane and changed the world, here in Ohio. I humbly thank you for hearing my testimony on behalf of HB 370, and on behalf of the one and only birthplace of aviation.