

Members of The House Transportation committee,

I would first like to thank each and every one on giving me this opportunity to address you today on House bill 76. This bill means a lot to me as a proud National Guardsman and a recipient of The Ohio Cross Medal. I was awarded The Ohio Cross on the 15th Day of December 2011 by Governor John Kasich. I received this medal for my performance of risking my life to save the lives of others. I did this voluntary and without regards to my own safety. You ask what is the Ohio Cross award? Regulation 600-8-22 of the Ohio Adjutant General's Awards program states the following.

The Ohio Cross is issued to a member of the state military forces who distinguishes himself/herself by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his/her life. The deed performed must have been by voluntary act and of personal bravery or self-sacrifice, so conspicuous as to clearly distinguish the individual for gallantry and intrepidity above his/her comrades and must have involved risk of life. Incontestable proof of the performance of the service is exacted and each recommendation for the award of the Ohio Cross is considered on the standard of extraordinary merit: awarded by the Governor of the Adjutant General, in the name of the Governor.

The Ohio Cross can only be awarded by the Governor, or the Adjutant General, in the name of the Governor and the people of the state of Ohio, during appropriate ceremony.

Master Sgt. Dallas E. Root of the 178th Wing of the Air Force National Guard received this award not only once but twice. The first was in 2005 and the second was on the 16th of Oct. 2016. While receiving the award Maj. General Mark Bartman stated "It's amazing that it's the second time in 11 years because it's pretty rare that anybody would receive the Ohio Cross not just once in their lifetime, but twice."

Recently I told my wife that I would like to add military license plates to my vehicle as I am currently planning to retire. I started looking at all of the license plates available to military personnel and my wife stated " Why don't you get a plate with the Ohio Cross ". I started looking for the license plate and I noticed that one was not offered for the Ohio Cross. I called our local BMV and asked if this plate was available which they advised that it was not. I asked myself how the highest Military award for the State of Ohio cannot be available. This is when I called Rep. Arndt.

I personally want to thank him for introducing this bill along with Rep. Gavarone for realizing how special this award is to me and any other service members from the State of Ohio who in the future may receive this award. This gives us the opportunity to display our service not only to this great country but also the great State of Ohio.

Thank you,

Jody R. Hatfield.

