



**Representative John M. Rogers
60th House District**

**Transportation and Public Safety Committee
Sponsor Testimony on HB 270
October 25, 2017**

Chairman Green, Vice Chairman Greenspan, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 270, legislation that would name a portion of Interstate 271 after the late Captain Michael Louis Palumbo Jr.

As my colleague Representative Smith stated, Michael Palumbo served for many years as a firefighter in multiple capacities, including the Wickliffe Fire Department, which is in my district and a former hometown. As many are aware, firefighters by virtue of their hazardous duties find themselves frequently exposed to carcinogenic materials. Unfortunately, Mr. Palumbo's exposure is believed to have been the basis of his contracting a very aggressive form of brain cancer with no known cure. Indeed, this cancer was so debilitating that it left him unable to fulfill his duties as a firefighter and support his family, which included his 5 children. Tragically, after a 21-month long battle, Captain Palumbo passed away on May 24, 2017.

As a firefighter, Michael's job and that of so many like him are oftentimes required to put themselves in harm's way on behalf of the safety and well-being of the public. Despite this risk, Ohio law until recently did not recognize that such exposures could cause such diseases, precluding Mr. Palumbo and his family to make a qualified claim for workers compensation. With the passage of Senate Bill 27 in the 131st General Assembly, sponsored by then-Senator Tom Patton, firefighters like Mr. Palumbo and their families now have the opportunity to file a claim for workers compensation and ensure benefit coverage for those who develop cancer in the line of duty. Named the "Captain Michael Louis Palumbo Jr. Act", this legislation with broad bipartisan support, was signed into law earlier this year.

Dedicating a portion of Interstate Route 271 will honor Michael Palumbo's memory as a husband, father, and firefighter who proudly served his community. And, it is because of Captain Palumbo's sacrifice that many other firefighters and their families will no longer have to fear a burden as a result of a condition caused by the circumstances of their occupation.

Once again, thank you for allowing us the opportunity to testify. We respectfully ask for your support in the passage of HB 270, and look forward to any questions the committee may have about this legislation.