

Chairman Green, Vice-Chair Greenspan, Ranking Member Sheehy, thank you for allowing me this opportunity and a very special thank you to Representative Hughes for sponsoring this important legislation.

For those familiar with Pelotonia – the incredible part about this movement is that everyone has a story about the experience. Experiences that will make you laugh.... make you impassioned about cancer research....and move you to tears.

While I can't share all of these amazing stories, I can share a bit of mine. 8 years ago, I was 25 years old with seemingly my entire life ahead of me. In a matter of days, I found myself admitted to the ICU and in the midst of an over two month stay in the hospital I was diagnosed with an incurable blood cancer called Multiple Myeloma. This is a cancer that typically strikes people in their 60's and 70's. My first thought was to ask my parents if the oncology team told them I wasn't going to make it. Myeloma is a hellacious disease with a survival rate of 2-5 years. The only way to combat diseases like this is through the funding of critical research.

As I was in the middle of that hospital stay, the Columbus Dispatch ran an article on an event called Pelotonia. It was a first-year bike ride that was donating all of the proceeds to The James Cancer Hospital at Ohio State. Even more remarkably, the article highlighted a doctor at The James that specialized in Myeloma. My father reached out to this doctor to see if he was accepting new patients and to let him know of my situation. On the Opening Ceremony of the first Pelotonia, a storm blew through that sent riders and supporters running to their cars. While there, Dr. Don Benson saw the email from my dad and immediately called him. Shortly thereafter, I was a patient of Don's and preparing for a lifesaving bone marrow transplant. From then on, I was forever linked to the mission of Pelotonia and I've not missed a ride nor will I. I look forward to the day that the ride is no longer a ride to raise funds for cancer research but to celebrate the eradication of this horrible disease.

Until we get to that point, the funding for research and Pelotonia is critical to our entire community and state. I take great pride riding north on 71 to visit my in-laws or south on 71 to Reds games with that neon green arrow on my Jeep. We see them all over the state and even across the country because of the growth of this incredible community. By having Pelotonia license plates as an option for the tens of thousands of supporters, additional dollars and awareness can go to a cause that impacts every single one of us.

I mentioned the survival rate of Myeloma and that I am now over 8 years since my diagnosis. Since that time, I have had the honor of marrying my soul mate and in the past year we welcomed the most perfect little girl into our family. This is a direct result of cancer research and Pelotonia.

Thank you.