



### **Sponsor Testimony: HB 387 – Women Veterans Bridge**

Chairman Green, Vice Chair Greenspan and Ranking Member Sheehy: thank you for providing me with the opportunity to deliver sponsor testimony on behalf of Rep. Boccieri and myself for HB 387, a bill to designate the Austintown Township Bridge spanning State Route 11 and Mahoning Avenue as the “Women Veterans Bridge.”

The idea for this legislation came from former Disabled American Veterans District 7 Commander Leo Connelly, who approached our offices about the idea earlier this year. We were immediately supportive of the prospect of providing Mahoning County with a commemorative landmark like the one already in Trumbull County honoring the contributions of female veterans. If HB 387 passes, it would create only the second such bridge in the state.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, there were almost 61,500 living female veterans in the State of Ohio last year, the sixth highest number in the country. In Mahoning County, we are home to 1,122 women who have served. These women have played a significant role in all of our nation’s major conflicts, and we believe HB 387 is just one way we can honor their contributions. From battlefields to bond-drives, women veterans have served faithfully to help maintain our nation’s freedoms. We believe it is only fitting that the Legislature commemorate their sacrifices.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 387 and I welcome any questions you may have.