



**State Representative Thomas E. West
House District 49**

Chairman Green, Vice Chairman Greenspan, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the Transportation and Public Safety Committee. Thank you for taking the time today to consider House Bill 429, which will create a Canton Bulldogs license plate.

Canton is one of the largest cities in Ohio, ranking in the top 10 for population. Canton is also home the Pro Football Hall of Fame, which brings many tourists to our city. Visitors come for more than just the Hall of Fame; they come for the community. A city full of visible pride for its teams will help to build a bridge between the Pro Football Hall of Fame and the rest of our community. The license plates will send a message that our community supports our local schools and teams. Likewise, community and school spirit have a strong correlation with student achievement and community involvement.

Along with showing community and school pride, the license plates would add to an already remarkable rivalry between Canton and Massillon schools. The rivalry between our football teams is arguably the greatest in the country. Our Massillon Tiger neighbors have been displaying their school spirit through license plates for a few years, and it is Canton's turn to do the same.

While community and school spirit are extremely important to the City of Canton, the potential funding from these license plates is just as important. For every Canton Bulldogs license plate issued, \$30 of the fee will go to our school district. Any additional source of funding is a huge benefit to our students.

Members of the Canton community are proud of our city and our schools. Having a new means to express this pride, which doubles as a fundraiser for our schools, is a great opportunity. Thank you again for your time, and I look forward to taking your questions.