

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

I am here this morning first to thank you and cosponsors of Amended H.B. 431 for your consideration in honoring one of Columbus finest officers Thomas R. Hayes. Officer Tom Hayes was shot in the line of duty in December 1979 while attempting to arrest one Ron McClary. Mr. McClary was sixteen years old at the time of the shooting. He stopped the future of Brother Hayes as a law enforcement officer that evening but not the person.

Mr. McClary was convicted as an adult of felonious assault and served 24 years in prison. There were two teenagers involved that night. They stated after there arrest they had been drinking, smoking marijuana and had used the drug LSD.

As a result of Brother Hayes being shot in the back that evening he, his wife and family suffered with Tom until his death some 33 years later. Brother Hayes suffered serious health issues and several operations over the years and lost both legs before his passing. Officer Hayes end of watch was January 2011 when he succumbed to injuries from being shot in the back that night in December 1979 in a convenience store.

From day one Tom Hayes prayed, I am sure, for his survival from his hospital bed at Riverside where his wound left him paralyzed from the waist down. He also prayed that the perk would some day go to heaven for that is where Brother Hayes thought he was going because of the wounds he had suffered. The remaining years of Brother Hayes life was never easy for him, his family and friends. During his life he did make a difference to many others. He worked as a sketch artist for Columbus Police Department, was active in Shamrock Club, Hiberians and assisted the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #9 with our Easter Seal program where he designed Easter Seal cards to assist those children. Tom had many talents to share, he was a great example of determination for all of us who knew him. We were Blessed to have had the opportunity to share a part of our life with him. In final account Tom through prayer with determination over the years that Mr. McClary would come to know Christ, even though they never met Tom forgave him and prayed for his conversion to Christ, Tom's prayers were received and answered.

Is that not a true professional, a true servant of the people and deserving of the honor you may grant Brother Hayes by naming this section of U.S. 33 from West Fifth Avenue to Souder Avenue in his honor. This route of US 33 brings his life full cycle as he was a graduate of Grandview High School and your route takes him from Grandview to the area of Holy Family Church where his funeral mass was celebrated!

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to speak in support of H.B. 431

“Officer Tommy Hayes Memorial Highway”.

Dewey Stokes
President Emeritus
Capital City Lodge 9