

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Chair Wiggam  
Vice Chair Ginter  
Ranking Member Kelly  
**From:** Representative Dick Stein  
**Date:** February 20, 2019  
**Re:** Sponsor Testimony: HB32 Ohio Flag Retirement Protocol

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Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair Ginter, Ranking Member Kelly and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present House Bill 32 to recommend a ceremonial retirement protocol for the Ohio State Flag. This project idea came to me by a local Boy Scout, Brandon Tolle, pursuing his Eagle Scout rank.

I am sure many in this room have heard of or participated in a retirement of the United States Flag. Many groups including the VFW, American Legion, all branches of the military, and the Boy Scouts regularly gather for ceremonial flag retirements. These groups follow strict guidelines established in the United States Flag Code to ensure the integrity of the flag is upheld in display and through retirement. HB32 will afford the same treatment to our state symbol.

The ceremony specifies separating the flag into 6 pieces; the 5 stripes will be separated from the blue field. The wording of the ceremony draws on the symbolism of our flag; the stripes represent the roads and waterways, the blue field, our hills and valleys. Each piece shall be retired by fire.

To put the history of our flag into context, Ohio was admitted into the Union on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1803. The Great Seal of Ohio was adopted March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1803. The Flag of Ohio, was adopted nearly 100 years later, in 1902. In 2002, the General Assembly commemorated the centennial of the flag by adopting The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of Ohio. HB32 will add the last piece, retirement.

Please join me in honoring our state symbol. I appreciate your attention to my testimony today. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairwoman.

Sincerely,



Dick Stein  
House District 57