



Representative Terrence Upchurch
10th House District

**House State and Local Government Committee
House Bill 117 Sponsor Testimony
Representative Terrence Upchurch
Designate “August 31” Frank Robinson Day
March 20, 2019**

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chairman Ginter, Ranking Member Kelly and members of the State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 117, legislation to designate “August 31” as Frank Robinson Day.

Frank Robinson was born August 31, 1935, in Beaumont, Texas. A natural leader, Robinson made his major league debut in 1956 for the Reds, where he spent 10 seasons. He was the first African American to manage, starring as a player-manager for the Indians in 1975—and homering in his first at bat. Robinson played in 14 All Star games and remains the only big leaguer to win Most Valuable Player in both the American and National Leagues. He was elected to the MLB Hall of Fame on his first ballot in 1982.

Frank Robinson’s accomplishments both on the field and in the dugout are innumerable—he’s an all-time great—but his impact off the field is even more important.

A civil rights pioneer, Frank Robinson led by example and opened the door for black and brown managers, executives and team representatives. He broke down barriers. He was a leader, a mentor and trailblazer for all who came after him.

For his impact on the game and on American life, President George W. Bush awarded Robinson the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2005.

Hearing stories about Frank Robinson, you cannot help but be impressed by the lasting impact he had not only on the game of baseball, but on the American Story. He is certainly someone we would be proud to have our kids look up to, someone who truly embodies what it means to be a great Ohioan.

I respectfully ask that this committee adopt House Bill 117 to memorialize one of our State’s great heroes. I will now take any questions you may have.

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