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Ohio's 73rd House District: Western Portion of Greene County

House State and Local Government Committee

House Bill 301 – Aircraft

Sponsor Testimony

24 October, 2019

Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair Stevens, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding House Bill 301, a bill which will establish a direct process in which a party may obtain a title to an aircraft that has been left or abandoned on one's property.

The State of Ohio currently has no specific legislation to deal directly with abandoned aircrafts, but instead uses the closest applicable law which refers to abandoned watercraft. House Bill 301 which is endorsed and supported by the Ohio Aviation Association and the Ohio Aerospace and Aviation Technology Committee, would correct this oversight and allow for a title to be much more easily accessible in order to avoid the expenses of lengthy court battles just to remove an aircraft from the property. Aircrafts under these new provisions would include those at both commercial as well as private airports.

It is imperative to include this requirement in the Revised Code. By enacting this bill we will see benefits in our local communities throughout our aeronautics sector by allowing for businesses such as airports, to remove any unpaid or abandoned aircrafts in storage and seek to replace them with customers that will

stay within the guidelines of their contract. Additionally, these aircraft left behind denigrate the professional appearance of the airport.

This concern was brought to my attention by Lt. Col (Retired) Fredrick L. Pumroy, a board member of the Greene County Regional Airport. The issue began in 2012 with an aircraft owner who at the time was storing his aircraft at the Greene County Regional Airport and ceased to pay the required storage fees. After years of trying to work and reason with the aircraft owner, the airport finally took legal action to remove the aircraft. Due to the fact that there was no established legislation to deal with this, the Greene County prosecutor was able to declare the aircraft as officially abandoned using the revised code - "Auction Sales of Watercraft" after extensive review trying to locate an aircraft clause. Unfortunately this is not an isolated case. According to the Ohio Aviation Association there have been a number of instances throughout the state in which similar situations have occurred. There is no reason that these airports should have to spend years and legal costs to get rid of an aircraft that is not being used, is taking space from potential tenants, and is likely an eye-sore. The enactment of this bill will help the economic well-being of these airports, their communities and the State of Ohio.

Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair Stevens, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 301 and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.