



Representative John M. Rogers

60th House District

Sponsor Testimony - House Bill 25

Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 25, legislation that would designate a portion of State Route 2 in the Lake County as the "Patrolman Mathew Mazany Memorial Highway".

This legislation is being introduced to honor a Mentor Police Officer killed in the line of duty on June 24, 2018. Officer Mazany, while working the night shift, had responded to, and was providing backup for, a fellow officer who had initiated a traffic stop on State Route 2 in Mentor. Mat, having exited his cruiser, was approaching the scene of the stop when he was struck from behind by a vehicle driven by someone suspected to have been under the influence. The driver of that car sped off without stopping. Officer Mazany perished on the scene as a result of his injuries, prematurely ending a life which included 14 years of service with the Mentor Police Department and to the Mentor Community.

Those of you here today having served in the 132nd General Assembly, will remember House Resolution 536, formerly adopted by the House in November of last year and presented to Officer's Mazany's wife, Lisa and son, Mathew in Chambers last December.

Retired Mentor Police Sgt. Scott Tkach, Mazany's training officer when Mat started with the department, described Officer Mazany, "as an old school cop who was an excellent police officer." Matt, "knew what he was doing and he did it well." Responsible end-of-the-year evaluations for his officers, Sgt. Tkach recalled a conversation with Mat during his last evaluation where Mazany remarked, "Sarge, I love this job, and I love working with these people!"

As civilians, most of us cannot really appreciate the tremendous risks first responders' face on our behalf, risks that exist each and every moment during their careers. While each of us may think about our safety forces and their jobs momentarily, more so when we see a sad news story on television or read about a tragedy in the newspaper, there is nothing that gives us a realistic insight into the inherent dangers of their occupation as much as a line of duty death.

When a police officer or firefighter dies on the job, time stops momentarily for all of us because he or she was engaged in sworn duties to serve and protect all of us and others. Whatever happened seems so untimely and so unfair that it is difficult to ignore. But then as life continues to flow, we slowly move on.

When an officer who falls, is known personally, is loved by many, as in the case of Mathew by his family, those in his Department and within the Lake County community, the nature of the loss is much more powerful and dramatic. Yet few words or actions offer help with handling such a tragedy felt by so many.

The naming of this section of highway, which includes the area where Mat was killed, is but a small token in recognition and honor of Officer Mazany's life and sacrifice, while reminding those travelling through the city of a police officer's life unnecessarily lost in the service to his community.

Let me conclude by advising the Committee that the City of Mentor's Administration, Council, Police Chief and Department together with Mat's family have all indicated their support for this dedication.

I respectfully ask each of you for your support of House Bill 25, naming the section of state route 2 between route's 615 and 306 in Mentor, as the "Patrolman Mathew Mazany Memorial Highway" in Mat's memory. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

Thank you.