



Don Jones
State Representative

Chairman Green, Vice-Chairman McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 525 which creates the U.S. Army Specialist Christian D. Ward Memorial Highway in Lowell, OH in Washington County.

Christian was born and raised in Lowell, Ohio, alongside his five siblings, two of whom are active in the U.S. military today. Christian graduated from West Iredell High School in North Carolina, where his life was greatly influenced during the two years he spent as a member of the Ranger Team in the ROTC program. Christian entered the United States Army on July 13, 2015, shortly after graduating. After training, his orders were to be stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado, where he was promoted to crew chief of a UH 60 Blackhawk and the rank of Specialist. His company participated in the B9 command Joint Special operations THRACIAN SWORD 18 in Bulgaria. During his deployment, his company was stationed at Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base in Romania.

While deployed, Christian and his fellow soldiers spent much of their free time at a local orphanage. Christian fixed the chains on their bikes and asked family members to send him books and toys for the children during the holidays. Tragically in 2019 Christian was killed following a training accident in Colorado.

Christian was selfless and always thinking of others, which is what led him to being an organ donor. Because of this selfless choice, he was able to save three people through organ donation after his accident. Even though he is gone, his memory continues to bless young men and women who join the military after high school. His family has created a scholarship fund in his memory, hoping to give back to others who dedicate their futures to our country. This year, two \$500 scholarships were awarded to both Joshua Hupp and Lacey Hays in Christian's memory. This scholarship keeps Christian's memory and giving spirit alive while also helping young men and women transition into the United States Armed Forces. It is only fitting that we name a portion of State Route 60 in Lowell after this hometown hero.

Chairman Green, Vice-Chairman McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 525 and I ask for your support. Thank you.
