



Representative Bill Roemer
38th House District

HB 544 Sponsor Testimony

Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy and Members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you regarding House Bill 544, which will create the “Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad” license plate. The historical importance of trains in the Cuyahoga Valley cannot be understated, as they have formed an integral part of regional commerce for more than a century. Once transporting raw materials such as coal, the railways of the valley now provide a unique historical experience to eager passengers.

Stretching from Independence to Akron, trips along the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad (CVSR) offer scenic excursions varying from The Polar Express for children and families to Bike Aboard where passengers can stowaway bikes for riding at different stops along the Towpath Trail. In addition to this, CVSR also offers a Kids Ride Free special on weekdays in August. A total of 1,548 children boarded the train for a free ride in 2018.

The Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad consistently demonstrates regional and indeed statewide interest in excursions, exhibiting growth of at least 15% in ridership annually. This growth is powered in no small part thanks to the efforts of more than 1,500 volunteers, who in 2018 contributed 107,000 volunteer hours.

It is my belief that creating this designation for CVSR will demonstrate Ohio’s dedication to its historical roots. Steps such as these will ensure that future generations come to know and understand, in real time, the sacrifices so many Ohioans made to establish our state as the transportation nucleus of America.

Thank you again to Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy and Members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee for allowing me to speak before you today. I am available for any questions that you may have.