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June 2, 2020

Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy, and colleagues of the Transportation and Public Safety Committee — it is a great honor to provide sponsor testimony in support of House Bill 678 to designate the Sergeant Frederick A. Raby Highway.

Nearly 30 years ago, on September 1, 1990, Ohio State Highway Patrol Sergeant Frederick A. Raby was critically injured in a traffic accident on the Ohio Turnpike near mile marker 70 in Wood County. He was in his patrol car which was stopped behind a violator on the right berm with flashing lights in full operation. Another vehicle traveling at full speed drove off the roadway and struck his patrol vehicle from behind.

Fred received many critical injuries in the crash, including severe head trauma, a broken neck, broken hip, shoulder and leg injuries. He was life flighted to the Medical College of Ohio in Toledo. He had sustained severe trauma to the frontal lobe of the brain and remained unconscious for over a month while undergoing multiple surgeries. He had to be resuscitated numerous times and at one point the doctors gave him a five percent chance of survival. But Fred was physically fit, an Army veteran and he had a strong will to live. He slowly improved and was transferred to a rehabilitation center in Howell, Michigan which specialized in traumatic brain injuries. He spent a year there and was then transferred to the Eisenhower Center in Ann Arbor, Michigan, a longer term TBI facility where he continued to receive care and therapy.

Fred's recovery never progressed to the point where he could be released from the Eisenhower Center and he has remained there since he first arrived in 1991. According to his wife Gloria, the medical experts feel that Fred's mental capacity is that of a three to five years old. In addition to the permanent brain damage, his right side is paralytic and he is confined to a specialized wheelchair. He requires continuous monitoring, support and assistance in his day-to-day activities due to his brain injury.

The impact of this tragedy on Sergeant Raby, his wife Gloria, and their two sons Douglas and Bradley, who were 21 and 14 years old at the time, has been indescribable. Although he did not die as the result of the accident, he lost his life in such a way that he and his family have suffered and sacrificed every day for nearly 30 years. This incredible tragedy occurred while he was faithfully serving the citizens of Ohio and the Ohio State Highway Patrol.

Sgt. Raby joined the Patrol in 1966 as a member of the 71st Academy Class. Upon graduation, he was assigned to Medina where he was recognized as Post Trooper of the Year in 1969, and attained ACE status in 1973. In 1975 he transferred to Wooster, where he again received Post Trooper of the Year honors in 1976 and 1977. In 1978 he was promoted to the rank of sergeant and assigned to the Swanton post. He received a Superintendent's Citation of Merit in 1980 for defusing an extremely dangerous situation involving three armed felons who were traveling on the Ohio Turnpike with two kidnapped hostages in a stolen vehicle. The calm and professional resolution of this crisis earned him the distinction of being awarded the 1980 W. Merrell Meritorious Service

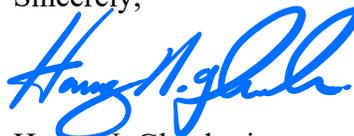
Award. In 1986 he was recognized by the State Employee Suggestion Award Program for a recommendation involving replacement of patrol car seat covers which saved the division \$8,000 in the first year.

In closing, I would like to share a short excerpt from an article written by his son Bradley in 2008 for the 75th anniversary of the Ohio Highway Patrol. Bradley wrote, "I would like to tell you a story about Superman. Superman puts on his uniform and transforms it into a symbol of safety that everyone looks up to. Superman is a man who doesn't let fear or anger fog his judgment, nor does he allow evil to triumph over good. He is a man who comes home from work and, whether his children are sleeping or awake, he gives them a kiss and tells them that he loves them. He is a man who defines courage and bravery and is what every man strives to be...This man I am telling you about is my father, Sergeant Frederick A. Raby, my Superman. His determination to serve and protect at all costs earned him the highest award in the Ohio State Highway Patrol, the O.W. Merrell Award."

Bradley went onto note the award is presented to sworn officers who act in a calm and professional manner, without falter, in the face of danger. His son concluded, "But the true reward for him was the thankfulness and safety of the two young women who he successfully rescued from the armed robbers."

Mr. Chairman and colleagues, no other officer in the history of the Ohio State Highway Patrol has experienced what Sergeant Raby has endured and he and his family are deserving of such recognition. Thank you for your earnest consideration of House Bill 678.

Sincerely,



Haraz N. Ghanbari

Member of the Ohio House of Representatives