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Minority Leader**

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Minority Whip**

Federalism and Interstate Relations Committee  
September 19, 2017  
Sponsor Testimony HR 193

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Lipps, Ranking Member Leland and members of the Federalism and Interstate Relations committee, thank you for hearing our testimony this afternoon on HR 193. We are pleased to offer such an important resolution for the Ohio General Assembly.

This resolution urges the United States Congress to award John and Annie Glenn Congressional Gold Medals for their service to our state and our country. We believe that John and Annie Glenn stand tall among Ohio's cherished heroes. Therefore, it is with great admiration and gratitude for their service that we call on Congress to award them with the highest civilian honor in the United States.

John Herschel Glenn Jr., born in 1921 in Cambridge, Ohio, was accepted into the U.S. Space program in 1959 where he was selected by NASA to be one of the first U.S. astronauts. On February 20, 1962, he piloted the Friendship 7 spacecraft around the globe three times becoming the first American to orbit the Earth. John Glenn's orbit around the Earth inspired other Ohio astronauts including Neil Armstrong of Wapakoneta, who was the first man to walk on the moon, and Judith Resnik of Akron, who was the second female astronaut in U.S. history. Thanks to the achievements of the Wright Brothers, John Glenn, Neil Armstrong, and Judith Resnick, Ohio is known as the Birthplace of Aviation Pioneers.

In addition to his pioneering space career, John Glenn was a Marine Corps pilot who served during World War II and the Korean War completing a total of 149 flight missions for which he received numerous awards and recognitions. John Glenn honorably represented Ohio as a distinguished member of the United States Senate for 24 years.

Anne Margaret Glenn was born in 1920 in Columbus, Ohio. Throughout most of her life, she suffered from a nearly debilitating speech disorder. After decades of struggling with this disorder, she completed an intensive speech therapy program at the age of 53. She then decided to dedicate her life to helping people with disabilities and communication disorders. She took a special interest in programs aiding children, the elderly, and people with disabilities, and became one of the nation's leading advocates for Americans with communicative disorders.

Upon his retirement from the Senate and his return from space as the oldest astronaut at 77 years old in 1998, John with his wife, Annie, founded the John Glenn College of Public Affairs at The Ohio State University. The mission of this program was to improve the quality of public service and to encourage young people to pursue careers in government. Annie, who was also an adjunct professor at The Ohio State University with their Speech Pathology Department, demonstrated the importance of both public service and education.

John and Annie Glenn's story is one of mutual dedication to public service in order to better help and improve their community, their state, and their country. They have left a legacy that serves as an inspiration to all Ohioans, and we believe its due time that they receive this important recognition from Congress.

We are grateful to Adam Sacowitz, a graduate student at Hofstra University, who researched the lives of John and Annie Glenn and brought this issue to our attention. For the many of us who knew and admired John and Annie Glenn, this seems well past due. Moreover, 25 Representatives (15 Democrats and 10 Republicans) in the Ohio House have offered bipartisan support by signing on as co-sponsors. We hope that with this strong statement of support, the United States Congress will take into serious consideration awarding these great American heroes with the highest civilian honor, the Congressional Gold Medal Award. The Glenn family's contributions to Ohio and the world deserve the utmost recognition from this legislature and the United States Congress.

Thank you for your consideration, and we would be happy to take questions at this time.