



**SENATOR
SANDRA R. WILLIAMS
21ST DISTRICT**

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Criminal Justice
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**Senate Bill 77 Sponsor Testimony
Senate Transportation, Commerce and Labor Committee
Wednesday, June 10, 2015**

Chairwoman Manning, Vice Chair Patton, Ranking Member Cafaro, and members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce, and Labor Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 77. This bill will designate parts of US Route 422 in Cleveland and Youngtown the "Arnold R. Pinkney Memorial Way."

Mr. Pinkney was born and raised in Youngstown and graduated from the Youngstown Public School system. His pursuit for higher education led him to Michigan, where he graduated from Albion College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and History. He attended Case Western Reserve School of Law and was awarded an honorary doctorate of law Degree from Central State University. During his time in college, he was elected to "Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities," was President of the Independent Men's Union, and was a standout student-athlete within the Intercollegiate Athletic Association for Baseball and Basketball.

Arnold Pinkney was a dedicated family man who loved his wife Betty and his daughter Traci. For over fifty years, Mr. Pinkney was a true statesman and served as one of Cleveland's most influential community leaders, civil rights activist, and successful local entrepreneurs. He also served his country in the United States Army.

Mr. Pinkney enjoyed professional success at Great Lakes Mutual Life Insurance and Prudential Life Insurance Companies respectively. His success at Great Lakes Mutual led Prudential Life Insurance to hire him as the first African American Agent nationally. As further demonstration of his abilities, he became the first African American Agent to become a Million-Dollar Producer; an achievement he held for five consecutive years.

Before co-founding the consulting firm Betpin & Associates, Inc. with his wife Betty T. Pinkney (President), he served as Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Pinkney-Perry Insurance Agency, Inc. In June 1961, Mr. Pinkney and his partner Charles B. Perry began Pinkney-Perry as a partnership. In 1965, they incorporated Pinkney-Perry as a general insurance agency and later established a location in the prestigious University Circle area of Cleveland. Today, the agency is Ohio's oldest and largest minority-owned insurance company.



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Mr. Pinkney held an active career as a franchisor. In 1978, he was a partner in Angela Mia Pizza Restaurant in the city of Cleveland. In the same year, he built two Wendy's Restaurants. Between 1982 and 1994, Mr. Pinkney built and operated a total of six Wendy's restaurants and was awarded a Wendy's franchise in the northwest section of Detroit. For three years, he was the largest Wendy's franchisee in the State of Michigan.

Mr. Pinkney served on the Cleveland School Board for 11 years and was President from 1971 to 1978. As an advocate for the Cleveland school system, he successfully lobbied the General Assembly to place the system under Mayoral control. He was also regarded as the strategist behind every successful school levy campaign in Cleveland including the most recent 15 mil level in 2012.

His dedication to his wife and daughter, Traci Pinkney, extends outward into the community, where his spirit of volunteerism, leadership and energy continues to empower and support numerous local civic, educational, and business agencies, including the Urban League, 100 Black Men, Inc., Cleveland Musical Arts Association, University Circle Incorporated, and the Race for Success, Inc. Mr. Pinkney's numerous contributions within the private and public sector continues to strengthen the well-being of our entire Cleveland community.

There is nothing we can do to repay him for what he has done for our community but say thank you and make sure his legacy lives on. Arnold Pinkney leaves behind a legacy of public service and dedication to others that should serve as a testament to the way he lived his life. The Arnold R. Pinkney Memorial Way would have significant meaning to the People of Cleveland and Youngstown, and therefore we ask for your favorable passage.

Madam Chairwoman and members of the committee this completes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.