



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

Committees
Public Utilities - *Ranking Member*
Finance - Sub-Committee on Workforce
Development, *Vice Chair*
Criminal Justice
Education
Energy and Natural Resources
Insurance
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Ways and Means

**Senate Bill 282 Sponsor Testimony
Transportation, Commerce and Labor Committee
April 20, 2016**

Chairman LaRose, Vice Chair Manning, 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 282.

Senate Bill 282 would establish the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (IBPOEW) license plate. The idea of this legislation was brought to my attention by the Exalted Rulers and Daughter Rulers of several Lodges and Temples across the State of Ohio. As drafted, the cost of the license plate would be \$25 of which \$15 would be earmarked to the Ohio Association of the IBPOEW. I have drafted an amendment to the legislation that would direct the funds to the Elks Education Fund which will allow the IBPOEW to expand the number of scholarships as well as tutoring and mentoring programs.

The IBPOEW currently boasts 500,000 members in over 1,500 lodges worldwide and is the largest Black fraternal organization in the world. The IBPOEW's stated purpose is "that the welfare and happiness of its members be promoted and enhanced, that nobleness of soul and goodness of heart be cultivated, that the principles of Charity, Justice, Brotherly/Sisterly Love and Fidelity be inculcated, that its members and their families be assisted and protected, [and] that the spirit of patriotism be enlivened and exalted."

The IBPOEW was granted a copyright as an organization on September 28, 1898, in Cincinnati, Ohio. The first Lodge, Alpha Lodge No. 1, was organized in Cincinnati, as a result of the efforts of Arthur James Riggs and Benjamin Franklin Howard.

On June 13, 1902, Emma Virginia Kelly organized the Daughters of Elks in Norfolk, Virginia. This group was later adopted by the Grand Lodge and became an auxiliary body to the Brothers of Elks. The first Temple was Norfolk Temple No. 1, Norfolk, Virginia.

Through the efforts of its members and various departments, the Elks sponsor extensive educational scholarship programs, youth summer computer literacy camps, programs for children with special needs, parades and community service activities throughout the world.

A few of the major departments of the Elks are the Grand Lodge Education Department, History Department, Medical Department, Veterans Affairs Department, National Youth



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Department, Civil Liberties Department, Antlered Guard Department, and the Hobson R. Reynolds National Shrine Department.

Chairman LaRose and members of the committee, this concludes my testimony. I'm happy to answer any questions.

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