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Mr. Chairman, members of the committee.

Thank you very much for allowing me the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 134, legislation paying tribute to an American hero who gave his life for a grateful nation.

Lt. Col. Thomas Belkofer of Perrysburg Township died May 18, 2010, in a Taliban attack on a NATO convoy in Kabul, Afghanistan. At the time of the attack, it was the first time in the war that three officers of the rank of lieutenant colonel and colonel were killed in one incident.

It is not my practice to seek out legislation such as this introduce. When I receive a compelling request to honor a fallen member of our military, I then consider going forward in the manner I have done with Lt. Col. Belkofer and SB 134. This bill has support from local government officials and community leaders, and a grateful mom for Senate introduction and consideration of this legislation.

Please find on your iPads the obituary for Lt. Col. Belkofer that details his life of accomplishment and service. Thank you.

BELKOFER Lt. Col Thomas P. Lt. Col Thomas P. Belkofer, age 44, of the Army's 10th Mountain Division at Ft. Drum, New York and formerly of Perrysburg Township, Ohio died on Tuesday, May 18, 2010 in a Taliban attack on a NATO convoy in Kabul, Afghanistan. Tom was born on June 2, 1965 in Toledo, Ohio to Donald Jr. and Sharon (O'Keefe) Belkofer. He graduated from Rossford High School in 1983 where he played football and was a standout wrestler. After High School he briefly attended Wright State University and the University of Toledo before transferring to Bowling Green State University where in 1992 he earned a bachelor's degree in architectural and environment design technology and married his college sweetheart, Margaret (Margo) Maness. He served in the Army National Guard before signing up for the ROTC program at BGSU and was commissioned into the Field Artillery as a Distinguished Military Graduate. In 2002, he earned a Master of Business Administration degree from Syracuse University. Lt. Col. Thomas Belkofer was an 18 year veteran of the United States Army. His operational troop leading assignments included Company Fire Support Officer, Platoon Leader and Battalion Adjutant for 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery at Fort Hood, Texas; and Battalion Fire Support Officer and Battery Commander for Alpha Battery, 3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery. His leadership duties included Fort Carson, Colorado, Fort Meade, Maryland, The Pentagon, Vicenza, Italy, and most recently, Fort Drum, New York. He was deployed to Afghanistan in 2005-2006 as Resource Manager for Office of Security Cooperation in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. In his career he was awarded the Legion of Merit (Posthumous), Bronze Star (1 Oak Leaf Cluster), Purple Heart (Posthumous), Meritorious Service Award (3 Oak Leaf Clusters), Army Commendation Medal (1 Oak Leaf Cluster), Army Achievement Medal (2 Oak Leaf Clusters), Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Global War on Terror Service Ribbon, Humanitarian Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Ribbon, Air Assault Badge, Parachutist Badge, the Army Staff Identification Badge, NATO Medal (Posthumous), and Combat Action Badge (Posthumous). He led a life of honor and was known as a man who loved his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, his family, his country, his Army and his beloved Ohio State Buckeyes, which he proclaimed wherever he was stationed. In Afghanistan in 2005, he could be found awake in the middle of the night so that he wouldn't miss a Buckeye football game. Surviving is his loving wife, Margo (Maness) Belkofer; daughters, Alyssa, age 15, and Ashley, age 11; parents, Donald and Sharon Belkofer; brothers, Don (Cathy) Belkofer and Doug Belkofer; father in-law, William (Eleanor) Maness; mother in-law, Pauline Maness. Also surviving are many, aunts, uncles, cousins and in-laws. Family and friends may visit at the Sujkowski Funeral Home of Rossford, 830 Lime City Rd. on Friday, May 28, 2010 from 2 to 8 PM. Funeral Services will be held on Saturday, May 29, 2010 at 10:30am at Cedar Creek Church, 29129 Lime City Rd., Perrysburg, OH. Interment will take place in Arlington National Cemetery. The family suggests those wishing to make a memorial contribution in Lt. Col. Thomas Belkofer's name to please consider Military Ministries #2283732, Campus Crusade for