**Testimony to the House Transportation Committee**

September 17, 2019

Dr. Phil Heit

Founder and Executive Director, Healthy New Albany

Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the Transportation Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify in support of House Bill 296, which would establish the Healthy New Albany license plate. My name is Phil Heit, and I am the executive director and founder of Healthy New Albany.

Healthy New Albany (HNA) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote health for those in New Albany as well as throughout central Ohio. It began as a grassroots movement in which individuals in the community wanted to promote the health of others. Thus, one-by-one, a farmers market was created. That was followed up with a community garden developed from lad donated by the City of New Albany. A magazine was published in partnership with CityScene Media Group and eventually a building was constructed for a prevention model which now houses The OSU Wexner Medical Center and Nationwide Children’s Hospital that now offers services to those throughout Ohio.

Funds received will be used to support community health programs that include but are not limited to the following: cancer survivor, senior wellbeing, community healthful cooking classes, exercise programs for people of all ages and heart health programs. The cancer program called I am Thriving is a model program that is unique and is changing lives. It is perhaps the most comprehensive and innovative program in the country featuring integrative wellness, cooking, and health lectures that address specific types of cancer.

HNA works with schools on prevention programs - vaping, smoking, opioids and behavioral health. HNA is training teachers to promote their own wellbeing through health lectures and exercise programs. For students, there is an emphasis now on early intervention with primary grades health activities and walking programs. With Children’s Hospital, research is being conducted on the relationship between exercise and focus in school. HNA provided Garmin activity watches for kindergarten students so that they can monitor their activity.

We just had our annual Walking Classic on Sunday, and 100% of all funds raised were allocated to prevention programs. Over 3000 people from throughout the country participated. This event was the foundation for HNA as it raised funds to initiate programs to help others. Everything that is now offered is a result of having this event.

Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the Transportation Committee, thank you again for allowing me to testify in support of HB 296, and I would now be happy to answer any questions you may have.