



Representative John M. Rogers
60th House District

Chairman Green, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the House Transportation Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony today on House Bill 458, legislation that if enacted, would create a specialized Ohio license plate representing the University of Alabama.

Specialized collegiate plates require individuals to complete a separate application for the purchase and renewal of the license plate as well as paying any additionally required contribution and administrative BMV fees to process the application. The contributions are then paid to the selected university for use in the awarding of grants and scholarships.

Under current law, the Ohio Department of Public Safety (DPS), through the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV), allows for special license plates to be created bearing the brand, logos, imagery and slogans associated with universities, community colleges and technical schools located within the State of Ohio through the Ohio Collegiate License Plate Program.

A license plate for a university not located in Ohio cannot be created through the administrative program. However, it can be created through separate legislation as is being offered today for your consideration. Indeed, during the 131st General Assembly, a University of Notre Dame license plate was created through the passage of House Bill 455.

Today, I respectfully ask for your consideration and support to allow an Ohio license plate to be created for the University of Alabama.

When this bill was introduced, there were at least 553 Ohio residents enrolled at the University of Alabama during the 2019-2020 year: 491 undergraduate students and 58 graduate students. There were 575 students enrolled for the 2018-2019 school year.

The Greater Cincinnati chapter of the University of Alabama's alumni association, "Crimsonati", was founded in 2011. The Central Ohio chapter in Columbus was founded in 2015.

The National Alumni Association has over 1000 registered alumni in the state of Ohio together with many parents, fans, and friends. The Cincinnati chapter in particular is very active in the charitable efforts of the national organization and won the best small out of state chapter of the year award from U of A's National Alumni Association for 2018.

Following the model of plates established through the administrative program, HB 458 would require a 30 dollar contribution collected from the issuance of each plate to be directed to the University of Alabama for use in awarding grants or scholarships to Ohio residents who attend the University.

The University of Alabama currently hosts two endowed scholarships in Ohio: one for students from the Columbus area and one for students of the Greater Cincinnati area. In July 2019 the approximate corpus for the Greater Cincinnati scholarship was \$57,855. The approximate corpus for the Central Ohio/Columbus scholarship was \$42,750. The Central Ohio chapter in Columbus will be presenting their first scholarship award in April 2021.

Additional scholarships for Ohio residents are in development at the time of this through to collaborative efforts of the University and its Ohio-based alumni and donors to meet the financial needs and increasing interest of current Ohio students attending UA.

As a proud alumnus of the University of Alabama's School of Law myself, where I obtained my LLM in Taxation, I know firsthand the impact scholarships could have for any Ohio resident travelling to Tuscaloosa to further their education. I would also like to point out that former Representative. Margaret Conditt, (R-Liberty Twp.) is also an alumnus of the University, where she majored in chemistry. Dr. Conditt worked for Procter and Gamble for 22 years where she worked in the Food, Paper and Pharmaceutical Divisions, as well as in Corporate Environmental Safety and Technical External Relations. Her work with P&G provided her with valuable insight on government regulations and their impact on innovation and business growth in free markets. A valuable perspective she brought with her to the Ohio House of Representatives.

In conclusion, The University of Alabama's committed Ohio alumni base together with the current Ohio student body and their families, all stand to greatly benefit by this specialized license plate program, an opportunity to help future Ohio students desiring to attend this institution of higher learning.

Thank you for your consideration. I would respectfully ask you for your support of this legislation and welcome any questions you may have at this time.

Thank you.