

Committees:

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Sponsor Testimony – State and Local Government – Dec 7th, 2022

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 438.

Judge Nathaniel R. Jones was a man who dedicated his life to seeking justice and uplifting his community. Born in Youngstown, Ohio, Judge Jones went on to serve his country during World War II. Following this Judge Jones enrolled in Youngstown State University and later attending law school. He became the first African American to be appointed as Assistant United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio in Cleveland and served as general counsel of the NAACP in 1969.

In addition to personally arguing several cases in the Supreme Court, he fought tirelessly to coordinate efforts to end northern school segregation and defend affirmative action. Following his time with the NAACP, Mr. Jones was nominated by President Carter to sit on the US Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit as Senior Judge. After his retirement Judge Jones joined Blank Rome LLP, located in Cincinnati, where he worked as Senior Council and served as the first Chief of Diversity and Inclusions Officer for the firm.

Nathaniel Jones was dedicated to improving the quality of life in our society which was evident in his personal sacrifices of time and energy to his family, friends and community around him.

House Bill 438 dedicates May 13th as Nathaniel R. Jones day with hopes to continue to honor and recognize one of the brightest legal minds and civil rights activists of our time for his groundbreaking work, compassion, and inspirational life and legacy.

We urge the passage of HB 438 to commemorate not only the dedication that Judge Jones had but to also to remind us of the countless lives he has touched throughout his lifetime and ensure the legacy of care and commitment he established will live on.

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chairwoman John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the State and Local Government Committee, I thank you for your time, and will be happy to answer any questions