



Good afternoon Chairman McClain, Vice Chairman Dobos, Ranking Member Grim, and the members of the Government Oversight Committee. Thank you for allowing us to bring House Bill 355 before you today. I will keep my remarks very brief.

House Bill 355, which is the re-naming of a major route through Licking County, is an endeavor to celebrate the many veterans who hail from Licking County, and their stories.

In 2014, the Licking County Library began a project to document the veterans that have lived in Licking County in an online database and preserve their legacies. We have now added over nine thousand men and women who served from the American Revolution to the present day that at one time in their lives called Licking County home. There are more yet to be counted, but these veterans we have collected have left us an amazing heritage that needs to be remembered and celebrated. If you visit a battlefield across the globe, nearly without exception there was someone who called Licking County home who fought, and perhaps gave their lives, upon that hallowed ground. A few of these Licking County veterans are in the room with us today, and we thank them from the bottom of our hearts for their service and sacrifice.

One thousand one hundred and five men and women have died while in service and thirty-eight of those are still missing in action. Licking County also has six men that were awarded our nation's highest award—the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The Licking County Library's Local History Coordinator, who has painstakingly collected the records and stories of so many of our county's veterans, is a man named Doug Stout. Doug has thrown himself into this work with fervor, vigor and intensity, and I have brought him here today to briefly share several of these men and women's stories with you.