

99th House District

Ashtabula County

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Sponsor Testimony – HB 383 – Designate Corporal John E. Ruch Memorial Highway

Chairman McClain, Vice Chair Dobos, Ranking Member Grim, and members of the Transportation Committee, thank you for hearing sponsor testimony on House Bill 383, legislation that will dedicate a portion of Route 20 in Ashtabula County to Corporal John E. Ruch.

Corporal Ruch was born in Akron, Ohio on October 31st, 1909. He graduated from South High School in Akron and continued his education at Akron University.

A graduate of the 2nd Academy Class at the Delaware State Highway Patrol Training School, Corporal Ruch earned his commission in April of 1934. He was assigned as a Patrolman at the Marion, Painesville, Massillon, Medina, and Geneva Posts and opened the Post at Chagrin Falls in 1941.

On March 4th, 1942, Corporal Ruch and Patrolman Paul D. Barnes left the Geneva station in a patrol car headed to Ashtabula High School to attend a Highway Patrol Auxiliary class of Legionnaires, to which Corporal Ruch was the instructor. The two began pursuing a speeding vehicle eastbound on US Route 20 when the patrol car lost control on the slush-covered roadway and struck a tree West of Ashtabula. Patrolman Barnes was seriously injured and Corporal Ruch passed away, at the age of 32, due to the crash. At his funeral service, all active members of the Delaware State Highway Patrol Training School were Guards of Honor.¹

It is my privilege to memorialize him through renaming a portion of Route 20 in his honor. I would like to thank Lieutenant Martina Jackson, the Ashtabula Patrol Post Commander, for bringing this dedication request to my attention.

I thank the committee for hearing my testimony on House Bill 383 and welcome any questions on this legislation.



¹<http://tiny.cc/CorporalRuch>