

H.B. 458 Sponsor Testimony

Chairman McClain, Vice Chair Dobos, Ranking Member Grim and members of the House Transportation Committee, I want to thank you for allowing me this opportunity today to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 458. While this name designation bill is twofold, its legacy of honor and remembrance will, I'm sure, leave an indelible impact on both Ohio motorists and distant travelers alike.

I want to begin with the first part of this legislation which would designate the bridge spanning the St. Joseph River on State Route 107 as the "*Gold and Blue Star Family Memorial Bridge*". This name pays homage to a tradition of honor and sacrifice which dates to the First World War. As the mothers of this country began sending their doughboys over to Europe in 1917, many would often display a white flag with red borders and a blue star pronounced in the center. This indicated to their community that the family had a son currently serving his country. Tragically however, if the family replaced the same flag with one bearing a gold star, this poignantly symbolized that their son had been killed during a period of hostility or in combat.

The designation of this bridge linking State Route 107 with the village of Montpelier will serve both as a tribute to *Gold and Blue Star Families* and as a beacon of awareness to motorists reminding us all of the costs we owe for freedom.

Secondly, this legislation would designate the viaduct spanning the railroad tracks within Montpelier as the "*POW/MIA Memorial Viaduct*". This designation would honor the valiance and bravery of former and current prisoners of war and those missing in action. Just like the previous designation, this naming recognizes those men and women of

not only Williams County but all Ohioans who have served and continue to defend this country.

Successful passage of both these designations will forever illustrate the sacrifices which so many before us have made. I urge passage of this legislation so that these designations can move judiciously through the House. Thank you, Chairman McClain, Vice Chairman Dobos, Ranking Member Grim, and members of the Transportation committee. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.