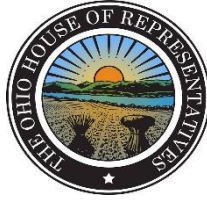


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**Representative Angie King
Ohio House District 84**

**Sponsor Testimony on House Bill 679
Before the House Transportation Committee
December 3rd, 2024**

Chairman McClain, Vice Chair Dobos, Ranking Member Grim, and members of the House Transportation Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 679 designating a portion of State Route 47 in Darke County as the "PFC John Wayne Richard Memorial Highway."

John Wayne Richard, born and raised in Versailles, Ohio, is remembered as a loving brother and son. Always willing to lend a helping hand, John was always someone to put others before himself. Growing up in Versailles, John was a young man who wanted to work hard and be a productive member of his community. From playing with the neighborhood kids to washing cars at the Subler Transfer on Main Street after school, John was always known for his kindness to others.

Following his high school graduation, Pfc. Richard enlisted as a member of the United States Army, deploying to the heart of the Vietnam War. On May 21, 1969, in Long An Province, southwest of Saigon, Pfc. Richard was caught in a deadly ambush while stationed on the south bank of the Vam Co Dong River, an area known for its dense jungles and unpredictable combat situations.

In the early morning hours of that day, Pfc. Richard and five other brave soldiers were in a night defensive position when they came under attack from enemy forces on three sides, with the river to their rear providing no escape route. Despite being surrounded and facing overwhelming odds, John and his comrades fought tirelessly to defend their position. Tragically, Pfc. Richard, along with four of his fellow soldiers, lost their lives in the engagement. Their bravery that day is a testament to their unwavering commitment to their country and their fellow soldiers. This road naming will be a reminder of the tremendous cost of freedom and the profound debt of gratitude we owe to those who defend it.

In Closing, I respectfully urge my colleagues to support this designation, which will serve as a lasting memorial to an honorable young man from Versailles, Ohio, who gave everything for his country. I graciously ask for your support of this legislation and thank you for allowing me to speak on behalf of House Bill 679.