

Bobbi D. Montgomery, 2018 Graduate of the Jo Ann Davidson Ohio Leadership Institute

Good afternoon, Chairman Wilkin, Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member DeMora, and members of the General Government Committee; my name is Bobbi Montgomery. I am a 2018 Jo Ann Davidson Ohio Leadership Institute graduate, and I appreciate the opportunity to address you today in support of Senate Bill 323.

Speaker Davidson's achievements are vast; I could never encapsulate them here today. However, I would like to share some reasons Ohioans would benefit from an enduring celebration of her legacy.

Speaker Davidson's leadership was characterized by her methodical and thoughtful approach. She was known for seeking understanding before acting, and she always prided herself on being the best-prepared person in the room. Her thoroughness in tackling each problem meant she was always ready to find practical solutions.

Speaker Davidson's leadership was phenomenally pragmatic and effective. Her sensible approach to governance directly improved the lives of Ohioans. Her realism allowed her to identify problems, prioritize actionable strategies, and find practical solutions. Her dedication to service-oriented thinking was renowned for 'getting the job done.'

Speaker Davidson's commitment to collaboration was an essential aspect of her leadership. Her teachings in the Institute embodied what a leader should be: supportive, generous, gracious, engaged, and curious. She demonstrated the resilience and tenacity necessary for women to lead. Her emphasis on using one's talents to create tangible improvement in our communities across this state and her belief in prioritizing the growth of others over personal recognition are powerful lessons in the value of collaboration.

Speaker Davidson was a woman of many firsts, including becoming the first female Speaker of the Ohio House. However, she was not only remarkable because she was the first but also because she was among the best. She instilled in Institute members like me that it is necessary to be the best woman for the job and the most qualified person for the job. Speaker Davidson achieved extraordinary feats throughout her life, and despite being one of the most competent and talented politicians of her day, Speaker Davidson did not operate with ego and modeled the importance of humility in leadership.

For much of the public, politics is conducted behind closed doors. This air of mystique and intrigue makes engaging with politics daunting. Speaker Davidson sought to convince women that they were capable, inventive, and resourceful. She showed them their talents were needed in public positions, from school boards to the State House. Her efforts have had a tremendous ripple effect, and Institute members have grown from students to

Bobbi D. Montgomery, 2018 Graduate of the Jo Ann Davidson Ohio Leadership institute leaders. A new generation of female leaders in Ohio now shape policy, improve outcomes for their communities, and create a stronger state, all informed by the ideas and ethics passed down from Speaker Davidson. Her impact will be felt for generations to come.

Through the creation of the Institute, Speaker Davidson remained a true servant leader throughout her long life, and thus, she left a lasting influence through her commitment to helping Ohio women thrive in leadership. Her incredible legacy should be commemorated every September 28th. Establishing a Speaker Jo Ann Davidson Day honors her remarkable life and serves as a beacon of inspiration for future generations. It makes the lessons from her incredible life of service available to future leaders and will enshrine a genuine and enduring legacy of leadership. She taught us to ask, "Is it right? Is it good? Is it fair? Does it help?" Yes, Madame Speaker, honoring you is all those things.

Thank you!