

Senate Bill 323
November 12, 2024
Senate General Government Committee

Written Proponent Testimony submitted by Christa Colasante
2002 Graduate of the Jo Ann Davidson Ohio Leadership Institute

Chairman Wilkin, Vice Chairman Schuring, Ranking Member DeMora, and members of the Senate General Government Committee:

My name is Christa Colasante and I appreciate the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on Senate Bill 323. I currently live in Chicago, Illinois and unable to attend in person.

Senate Bill 323 honors the late Speaker Jo Ann Davidson by designating September 28th as Speaker Jo Ann Davidson Day. Speaker Davidson is truly an Ohio legend that embodied the best of public service. The Jo Ann Davidson Ohio Leadership Institute is her greatest legacy.

I was deeply honored to be selected as a member of the Class of 2002. Speaker Davidson created the Jo Ann Davidson Ohio Leadership Institute to encourage and elevate women into leadership roles in public, political and community service.

You will find these graduates holding positions as township trustees, city council members, Mayors, State Representatives and State Senators along with serving as prosecutors and judges. Our members serve in appointed positions on numerous State Boards and Commissions and leadership roles in many community organizations.

The opportunity to be a part of the Jo Ann Davidson Ohio Leadership Institute was truly a profound and rewarding experience for my career. I was a lobbyist and started my own political consulting company. Her guidance and mentorship could always be counted on with a deep commitment to elevate women to achieve their dreams. She was always there for me and many others with the right advice and uplifting spirit to excel in everything that we do. I have always respected and admired her strong work ethic and impeccable integrity.

Speaker Jo Ann Davidson was the embodiment of grace, dignity, integrity and strength. She truly was an outstanding public servant. More importantly, Jo Ann was a genuine and honorable person.

There is no woman in the state of Ohio that has contributed more to public service. It is only fitting that we designate September 28th as Jo Ann Davidson Day. Speaker Davidson created not just good public policy for our state but outstanding future leaders who will serve Ohio with honor and distinction.

Ohio needs to honor the life of an extraordinary woman and her amazing legacy that will endure for many years. Her legacy will live on thru family, friends, fellow legislators and the JAD graduates that will honor and preserve her memory.

I ask for your support of Senate Bill 323. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony on behalf of the greatest Speaker in Ohio history.