

Kristina Roegner
State Senator
27th Senate District



Sponsor Testimony

Senate Bill 152

Ohio Senate Transportation Committee

October 11th, 2023

Chair Kunze, Vice-Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Antonio, and Members of the Senate Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 152, a bill to designate the portion of State Route 8 through Cuyahoga Falls as the “Cpl. Jack O. McClure Memorial Highway.”

Corporal Jack McClure was born and raised in Cuyahoga Falls, and was drafted into the United States Army upon graduation in 1942. Shipping out shortly after marrying his high school sweetheart, Evelyn, McClure attended basic training at Camp Wheeler in Georgia. While in basic training, McClure applied for the Army Air Cadets and was one of a group of 88 selected for service out of a pool of 1,700 applicants.

McClure spent nearly a year in Air Cadet School training to be a B-25 bomber pilot, attaining the rank of “Captain,” before Washington D.C. advised that Air Cadet Pilots were no longer needed. Upon receiving this news, he transferred back into the regular Army infantry as a Private First Class. At some point, he learned that the infantry unit he originally joined was sent directly into combat and that nearly all soldiers were captured or killed by Nazi forces.

On June 6th, 1944, Pfc. McClure found himself a part of the 76th Infantry Division, 304th Regiment, “D Company,” storming Normandy as part of the first wave. After surviving D-Day, McClure and his unit completed various military assault missions, fighting their way through hedgerows towards Luxembourg. From there, Pfc. McClure fought in the “Battle of the Bulge,” the siege of Bastogne, and numerous other unnamed conflicts – some other engagements he remembered included:

- Capturing 200 Nazis at the border of France and Belgium
- Watching as U.S. sharpshooters were unable to explode a mine Germans had floated downriver towards his pontoon bridge, resulting in the loss of his best friend and an entire truck of U.S. servicemen

McClure, now the rank of Corporal, returned home and was bestowed the Good Conduct Medal, the Meritorious Unit Badge, the American Campaign Medal, the European and African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, with three Bronze Stars. In April of 1951, by order of President Harry S. Truman, Cpl. McClure was awarded the prestigious “Bronze Star Medal” for exemplary valor and courageous actions in a time of war.

Cpl. McClure and his wife Evelyn built their family home and had 4 children, with Jack working at Goodyear as a mechanic until his retirement at 64. It was not until after his retirement at a weekly breakfast with friends that he began speaking about what he witnessed in the war, leaving many things left unspoken – he survived unimaginable horrors and it is through his remarkable courage and the grace of God that he made it back stateside. He filled his time after his wife Evelyn passed enjoying these friend’s breakfasts, watching old westerns, and caring for his lawn. He mowed his own lawn and held a driver’s license until the day he died, this past March the 22nd at 98 years old. While Cpl. McClure is no longer with us, his legacy includes 4 children, 12 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren and 3+ great-great grandchildren; as well as his memoir titled “D-Day to V-Day: World war II Memories.”

The men and women who have fought in our armed forces in defense of American soil deserve to be recognized and remembered for their heroism, and Cpl. McClure is among the finest of these Ohioans. It is my hope that this legislation will stand as a memorial to Cpl. McClure’s life and service, and serves as a reminder to us all that the comforts of freedom we enjoy every day come at a high price.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

