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Standing Committees
Transportation, Ranking Member;
Behavioral Health;
Finance;
Government Oversight;
Public Health Policy;
Economic & Workforce Development

Michele Grim
State Representative

Before the Senate Transportation Committee

Am. House Bill 54 – Designate Keith Earley Memorial Interchange

Sponsor testimony provided by Representative Michele Grim

April 17, 2024

Chair Kunze, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Transportation committee, thank you so much for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 54.

Keith Earley served as Lucas County Engineer for 19 years, beginning in 2000 and ending with his retirement in 2019. During his tenure, Mr. Earley oversaw numerous changes to the infrastructure landscape in Lucas County, including a dozen roundabouts, the formation of the Lucas County Transportation Interchange District, and the start of a new freeway interchange. It is this interchange between Dorr Street and I-475 that we hope to name in his honor.

Mr. Earley's work in Lucas County was appreciated by those who were lucky enough to work with him. Mike Pniewski, Keith's successor, praised his leadership while in office for delivering results to the people of Lucas County, especially during times of great financial challenge to the Engineer's office. Mr. Earley was a dedicated and passionate public servant, and his work has benefitted thousands of Lucas County residents.

Born in 1945 in Galion, Ohio, Mr. Earley began his professional career in the private sector in Southern California before returning to Ohio to serve as the Mercer County Engineer in 1983. He served in this role until his appointment as Lucas County Engineer in 2000. He was awarded Engineer of the Year in 2002 by the County Engineers' Association of Ohio and again in 2014 by the Toledo Society of Professional Engineers.

While I've already shared about Keith's professional accomplishments, I would also like to share a little bit about the Keith that Ruby Earley, his widow, has so lovingly described. Keith loved being a father and a grandpa, drawing with chalk with his grandkids, eating ice cream, and playing cards with them. Keith loved to golf and always had a smile on his face. Keith passed in 2021 after a battle with cancer. He is deeply missed by all who knew him.

House Bill 54 passed unanimously out of the House in November of 2023, and I would be honored to see its favorable passage out of the Senate Transportation Committee.

Chair Kunze, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Transportation committee, thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.