



**State Senator Kent Smith**  
Democratic Whip  
21<sup>st</sup> District

Ohio Senate  
Senate Building  
Columbus, OH 43215  
614-466-4857

Sponsor Testimony for SB 260

Madame Chair Kunze, Vice-Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Antonio, and fellow members of the Senate Transportation Committee. Thank you for allowing me to give testimony on Senate Bill 260, which would designate a portion of Lake Shore Boulevard the SPC Connor Wilson-Reichert Memorial Highway.

This memorial would cover westbound and east bound lanes of state route number 283, Lake Shore Blvd between East 250th Street and Eastbrook Drive in Euclid, Ohio. This is the closest State Route where Connor grew up and where his parents still reside.

Connor Wilson Reichert was a 2012 graduate of Lake Catholic High School and following a year at Kent State University, he enlisted in the U.S. Army where he would serve eight years in active and reserve duty. He was trained as an EOD is Explosive Ordinance Disposal technician - meaning he was a member of the bomb squad. His training resulted in service in Afghanistan. During his military service he earned the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Global War on Terrorism Medal. His father, whom I have known for years, described Connor as “a badass.”

Sadly, his father’s respect, his family’s love, and recognition from the nation he served, did not prevent Connor’s suicide on February 14, 2020, at the age of 25. But what is equally troubling is Connor’s best friend in the Army, Matt, who was also a bomb squad tech, also ended his own life about 18 months later, on July 24, 2021. According to his father, Matt (the best friend) was one of four EOD technician suicides during the Summer of 2021.

Members of the Transportation Committee, the naming of part of State Route 283 would help this family heal and raise awareness of the lingering problem of veteran suicides. At this time, I will do my best to answer any questions that Committee Members might have.