

Emily McClimans

Testimony on HB 259

Chair Willis, Vice Chair Daniels, and members of the House Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on HB 259, which will designate a portion of State Route 241 in Summit County as the "Captain Joshua Michael McClimans Memorial Highway.

Captain Joshua Michael McClimans lived for his family, loved his country, and laid down his life for the future of American citizens. Although many have pledged to defend and protect the nation in which they call home, I am honored to be the daughter of a man who selflessly bled and died for my tomorrow. On behalf of my father, Captain Joshua Michael McClimans, known to me as just "dad," I am requesting a Memorial Highway to be dedicated in his honor.

My father took the oath to defend and support the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and that he would faithfully fulfill those duties in his everyday life when he joined the United States Army as a commissioned officer in 2003. He graduated from the University of Akron as a registered nurse and a 2nd lieutenant in the United States Army. My father spent countless hours working in the trauma unit at Summa Hospital in Akron, Ohio, pouring his heart into the profession. Highly skilled and personable, my father had a way of making his patients feel secure and comfortable, even in moments of taking their last breaths.

Captain McClimans was deployed to Iraq and worked as a registered nurse in the 86th Combat Support Hospital. He played an integral role in the Intensive Care Unit, providing life-saving measures to both United States and Iraqi soldiers. He took many helicopter flights to rescue wounded soldiers, risking his life for them. His unit's bravery and selflessness are documented on the HBO documentary, Baghdad ER, where the human cost of war is documented, and my father and his unit's efforts to save lives despite gruesome circumstances are displayed. My father refused to allow anyone to die alone, and he spent many nights past his scheduled shifts holding the hands of fellow soldiers to ensure that they did not die alone.

After his deployment to Iraq, my father was promoted to the commander of his unit in Twinsburg, Ohio. He led his unit with kindness and was always willing to go out of his way to ensure each person's needs were met. In 2011, my father was deployed to Afghanistan. Prior to his deployment, I remember him saying, "I'm not a hero—I take care of heroes." His humility was one of his most notable attributes. While deployed, my father kept close contact with my brother's 2nd grade class, video chatting with them and teaching them all about life as a soldier. He flew an American Flag for each student in the class and wrote each student individualized notes that responded to the questions they had for him.

After approximately two months into his deployment, my father Captain Joshua Michael McClimans was hit by a sniper on his way to work at the hospital on base and was killed at just 30 years old. He was the first American Nurse killed in Afghanistan and left a lasting impression on every single person that he encountered during his deployment. A memorial plaque was created in his honor and was installed outside the entrance of the hospital in Afghanistan.

My father lived for red, white, blue, and freedom. He lived out the commitment he made to defending this nation and to providing a safe place for my brother and I to live. My father's legacy lives on not only through my brother and I, but through the people who hear his name and learn about his life and story. By naming a portion of Ohio's road after my father, his legacy will continue. Thousands of people will have the opportunity to see his name and to learn his story. His legacy of commitment and dedication to this nation, and to the state of Ohio through his selfless service will resonate in the hearts of

grateful Ohioans. I truly had the best father. I wish he could have seen me graduate, met my children, or celebrated life victories with me, but I am certain that he is with me every step of the way, guiding me and paving a path for his legacy to live on.

Thank you.