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Committees:
Veterans and Military Development,
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Local Government
Community Revitalization

HB 452 Sponsor Testimony
House Veterans and Military Development Committee
February 4, 2026

Chair Richardson, Vice Chair Mathews, and members of the House Veterans and Military Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on House Bill 452.

As stated, House Bill 452 seeks to establish October 1st as 761st Tank Battalion Day in Ohio to honor the courageous, valiant, and brave soldiers of the first African American tanker battalion in history, the first African American soldiers to fight in combat, and one of the most decorated tanker battalions of World War II.

It should be noted that of the 700 members that served in the 761st, several have ties right here in Ohio, including Sgt. Johnny “Bobo” Holmes of Alliance, Staff Sergeant Lymon Alexander who came to live in my hometown of Springfield, and Corporal Buddie Branch of Dayton.

It is important to note that this history is not ancient history. The last known living member of the 761st, Corporal Robert Andry, passed away just last January.

This dedication will go a long way in sparking conversations for future generations of this combat unit that played an integral role in securing the victory of the Allied forces during World War II, and in honoring these soldiers who put their love and dedication to country before everything, including segregation.

We look forward to working with this committee to advance this bill and are happy to answer any questions you may have. Also, Happy Black History Month!