



February 11, 2025

Susan Manchester, Chair
Government Oversight Committee

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR: S.B. 24 - Adopt the 1905 Wright Flyer III as the state airplane

Dear Chair Manchester, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Weinstein and members of the Government Oversight Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to supply testimony in favor of S.B. 24 to adopt the 1905 Wright Flyer III as the official state airplane. The Wright Flyer III is a symbol of both Ohio's aviation heritage and Ohio's current leadership in aviation and aerospace. As executive director of the National Aviation Heritage Alliance, the management entity for the National Aviation Heritage Area, I commend the Ohio legislators advancing this bill and ask the Government Oversight Committee to take favorable action.

The 1905 Wright Flyer III is the only airplane designated as a National Historic Landmark. It is the world's first practical flying machine, and what the Wright brothers considered their most important aircraft. Developed in Dayton, Ohio, this aircraft was the world's first airplane capable of sustained, maneuverable flight. Designating the Wright Flyer III as the official airplane of Ohio would serve as a fitting tribute to the ingenuity, perseverance, and pioneering spirit of the Wright brothers. Ohio has long been recognized as the birthplace of aviation, and it is only fitting that we embrace this rich heritage by selecting an airplane as a state symbol. The Wright Flyer III is on display in the Wright Brothers National Museum located at Carillon Historical Park in Dayton, Ohio.

State symbols play a crucial role in fostering a sense of identity, pride, and unity among residents. These symbols, such as the buckeye, cardinal, and carnation serve as powerful reminders of a Ohio's unique heritage, history, and cultural values. It is fitting that the State of Ohio would choose an official state airplane to symbolize our state's heritage and current leadership in aviation and aerospace.

I urge the members of the Ohio General Assembly to support Senate Bill 24 and designate the Wright Flyer III as the official airplane of the State of Ohio.

Mackensie Wittmer

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Executive Director
National Aviation Heritage Alliance