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Chair Manchester, Members of the Government Oversight and Reform Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to speak before you today in support of Senate Bill 24, brought forward by Senators Huffman and Johnson, which would designate the 1905 Wright Flyer III as Ohio's official airplane. As a great grand niece of Orville and Wilbur Wright, and a Buckeye born 50 years to the month after their first successful flight in Kittyhawk, NC., I will address you from the perspective of an incredibly proud family member and non-engineering major. Some apples do roll pretty far from the tree. But I do share my great grand's imagination soooooo, Tesla, Mars, and Milton, are the arguments I will use in support of this bill this morning.

The 1905 Wright Flyer III wasn't the brothers' first Flyer, but it was the machine that demonstrated all of their accumulative aerospace knowledge just 2 1/2 years after success at Kittyhawk. Following months of flight testing, re-design and crashes, Wilbur flew the '05 Flyer for 39 minutes consecutively, covering a distance of 27 miles, landing in an Ohio cow pasture only because their "Yeti thermos-sized" fuel tank was empty. The 1905 was their crowning achievement, and Uncle Orv insisted on bringing this flying machine back to Ohio many years later where he would design a building for its display at Carillon Park in Dayton and personally oversee the Flyer's restoration until his death in 1948. The '05 was arguably the brothers' biggest breakthrough in accelerating the idea of practical flight for man....it was their Tesla.

The '05 Flyer was also the beginning of a flight plan to Mars. When you speak to any aviator or astronaut today, they will tell you the basic principles of flight have remained the same since the Wright brothers' introduction of aviation in the early 1900's. Recently, NASA landed a tiny drone on Mars to make what the officials called some Wright-like flights in extreme conditions on another planet. They hoped to get at least 5 or 6 trial flights in with the small helicopter-like flying machine, but Ingenuity made 72 flights in under 3 years, and NASA named its air strip on Mars "Wright Brothers Field". Present-day Ohio engineering ingenuity was a part of that Ingenuity mission....why wouldn't we adopt the Wright Flyer III as an inspiring symbol of the genesis of human flight? Ohioans lessened the distances between world peoples 125 years ago, and currently, Ohioans are lessening the distances in space.

In 1948, my grandfather Milton Wright represented our family at the dedication of the Wright Flyer III to the now Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum. I want to share with you some of his words on flight because I think they still ring true today. I quote:

"The aeroplane means many things to many people. To some it may be a vehicle for romantic adventure or simply quick transportation. To others it may be a military weapon or a means of relieving suffering. To me it represents the fabric, the glue, the spruce, the sheet metal, and the wire which, put together under commonplace circumstances but with knowledge and skill, gave substance to dreams and fulfillment to hopes." End quote.

To me, Pappy's words not only describe a flying machine, but the innate nature of this State, and its' people....the fabric, the glue, knowledge and skill. The 1905 Wright Flyer III is without a doubt a sterling symbol of Ohioans' contributions to bettering and reshaping our world. Thank you for your time today.

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