



**Written Testimony to the Ohio State House
In Support of Naming a Portion of Lorain Avenue in Honor of John E. Gallagher, Sr.**

June 17, 2025

Chairman, Vice Chair, Ranking Member, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of the proposal to designate a portion of Lorain Avenue, near West 48th Street, in honor of John E. Gallagher, Sr. — a visionary entrepreneur, decorated veteran, and devoted philanthropist whose life and legacy have left an indelible mark on Cleveland and beyond.

At the corner of West 48th and Lorain stood the original headquarters of **Arrow International, Inc.**, founded by Mr. Gallagher in 1967. From this humble location, he built what would become the **world's largest manufacturer of charitable gaming solutions**, employing over 1,200 people worldwide and providing essential fundraising tools to thousands of charitable and nonprofit organizations. Today, Arrow continues to be headquartered in Cleveland and is a major employer and community partner.

Mr. Gallagher's journey from modest beginnings to international business leader is a testament to the power of hard work, faith, and family. He peacefully passed away on August 4, 2021, at the age of 92, surrounded by his beloved wife of over 70 years, Catherine (nee Dever), and their family. Together, they raised six children and built a life filled with purpose, joy, and service.

Born in Cleveland, John graduated from St. Coleman's Grade School and Cathedral Latin High School. He enlisted in the United States Army during World War II, serving with honor and earning several medals. He was immensely proud of his military service and of being an American patriot. A believer in lifelong learning, he later pursued executive training at the Wharton School of Business, balancing "street smarts" with formal education.

As the Founder and Chairman of Arrow International, John was a passionate and tireless leader who approached business with integrity, discipline, and optimism. He believed in the importance of listening to his employees — regularly walking the factory floors to check in on their well-being and solicit ideas for improvement. He was known for his honest counsel, sharp business instincts, and deep compassion. Always concerned for others, he encouraged employees to quit smoking, prioritize family, and embrace healthier lives.

His impact extended far beyond business. As Arrow International grew, a new headquarters was eventually built elsewhere in Cleveland. True to form, John and his family looked to donate the property to a local charity. Urban Community School became the recipient of the land in the early 2000's. The land was a transformative gift for the school which now occupies nearly 15 acres as they serve 800 children. The school's campus and early education center bear the name of the Gallagher family with great pride and appreciation.

John was a generous philanthropist to other organizations as well including Catholic Charities, The Cathedral of St. John The Evangelist, The Cleveland Clinic, The Holy Cross Brothers, Ellis Island, University College of Dublin, and Urban Community School, among many others. His leadership earned him several awards, including the prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honor. He was also a founding member of the Ireland Chamber of Commerce — USA, and was repeatedly named among Irish America Magazine's Top 100 Businessmen.

John was a devoted family man — a proud father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and mentor. His joy came from raising children with Catherine, traveling the world, and building friendships wherever he went. A natural conversationalist and eternal optimist, John never missed an opportunity to make others feel seen, valued, and inspired.

Urban Community School

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Urban Community School strives to break social and economic barriers to success for Cleveland's near west side children by providing an individualized, innovative, and challenging education. Rooted in the Ursuline Sisters' tradition of faith, character, and educational excellence, UCS engages our faculty, families, and community partners in the successful whole child development of our students.



Naming a portion of Lorain Avenue in his honor is not only a tribute to his remarkable entrepreneurial success, but a celebration of a life lived with purpose, generosity, and deep civic love. It will serve as a permanent reminder of his legacy and the countless lives impacted by his vision.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to support this legislation.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "T. Gill", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Thomas Gill
President