



Jamie Callender
State Representative District 57

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State Representative District 23

Chair Patton, Vice Chair Shaffer, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 27, which would dedicate the I-90 bridge over the Grand River in Lake County in memory of Army Specialist Jacob A. Ashton. House Bill 27 passed both in committee and on the floor with unanimous support. It currently has 26 co-sponsors.

Specialist Ashton was born in Willoughby, Ohio and graduated from Perry Highschool where he played football and baseball. He was an avid outdoorsman and an amateur body builder who enjoyed spending time with his family and helping his community. Enlisting in 2021 following his graduation from high school, Specialist Ashton attended Basic Combat Training at Fort Benning, Georgia and was assigned to the 10th Mountain Division stationed at Fort Drum in New York. In 2023, he deployed to Iraq as part of 10th Mountain's 2nd Brigade Combat Team. Specialist Ashton's enlistment was to end in December of 2024 after which he was planning to return to Northeast Ohio and enter public service as either a police officer or firefighter.

Tragically, following a weekend back home in Ohio, Specialist Ashton was found murdered on the morning of August 5, 2024, in his barracks parking lot. He was 21 years old. A fellow Army Specialist is currently standing trial for his premeditated murder.

During his four years in service, Specialist Ashton earned several awards and decorations including the Army Commendation Medal with C Device, the National Defense Service Medal, Inherent Resolve Campaign Medal, Global War of Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, and the Combat Infantry Badge.

While Specialist Ashton's family could not be with us in person today, they are tuned in on the Ohio Channel.

Chair Patton, Vice Chair Shaffer, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 27. Representative Troy and I are happy to answer any questions you may have.