



Representative John M. Rogers
60th House District

Sponsor Testimony on HB 330

Chairman Green, Vice Green Greenspan, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee. Thank for allowing me to testify this morning in support of House Bill 330, legislation that would designate a portion of State Route 91 in the City of Willoughby as the "Patrolman Jason Gresko Memorial Highway" in honor of the late Jason Gresko, a Willoughby Police Officer.

On Friday September 21, 2012, shortly after midnight, Patrolman Jason Gresko was responding to a request for assistance at Lake West Hospital located in Lake County Ohio. Traveling northbound on Harmony Lane, with his cruisers' emergency lights flashing, an oncoming pickup truck turned into Officer Gresko's path. Two 13-year-old girls and two adults occupied the truck. One adult, the driver, was later determined to have been intoxicated. The Officer, swerving to avoid a head-on collision, left the roadway and struck a tree. Although he was wearing a seatbelt, Officer Gresko was killed in the accident. Willoughby Police Lieutenant Tom Trem stated that, "the action Officer Gresko took, likely saved serious injury to those occupants of the other vehicle, unfortunately at the cost of his own life."

At the time of his death, Jason's position was that of a part-time police officer and his family was not eligible to receive a death benefit similar to what a family of a part-time firefighter killed in the line of duty might receive. To address this disparity, Senators Eklund and LaRose jointly sponsored the 'Jason Gresko Act' (SB 11) in the 131st General Assembly. This legislation passed unanimously in both chambers and was enacted into law in 2016.

Furthermore, with the assistance of Rep. Kirk Schuring, the legislature made sure in the FY2018-2019 Workers' Compensation Budget (HB 27) that Officer Gresko's family would be eligible for the benefits outlined in Sen. Eklund and LaRose's bill.

A husband and father, Jason was devoted to serving his family and community. Patrolman Gresko served as a police officer for 9 years in the Willoughby Police Department, and 6 years as a Cleveland Clinic Police Officer. It is my hope this morning that you will join me in honoring Jason's legacy by voting affirmatively for HB330.

Thank you for your consideration, and look forward to answering any questions you may have.