



State Representative Rick Carfagna
Sponsor Testimony – House Bill 15
House Transportation & Public Safety Committee
February 23, 2021

Chairman Baldrige, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy and fellow members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee. Thank you for affording me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 15. This legislation would designate a portion of State Route 13 in Knox County as the “William ‘Bill’ Burgett Memorial Highway”. This bill, formerly House Bill 377 last General Assembly, previously passed out of this committee unanimously. It was then amended into House Bill 616, along with other assorted memorial highway and license plate bills, which passed the Ohio House unanimously but failed to clear the Ohio Senate.

There is nothing I can say from this podium today that will properly do justice to the man that Bill Burgett was, nor the legacy that he has left behind. Bill’s impact to State of Ohio in terms of highway infrastructure, the construction industry, and our labor force are nothing short of legendary and transformative.

In 1951, with little more than a wheelbarrow, ladder, a few tools and his trusted friend and first employee Lester Rinehart, Burgett started what would become Kokosing Construction Company in the Village of Fredericktown in Knox County. The company specialized in road and bridge construction, but over the nearly seven decades since then, has grown to include several divisions including industrial construction, natural gas pipelines, asphalt, transportation and treatment plants, and an aggregation and gravel company.

Today, Kokosing Inc. is the 7th largest construction company in the Midwest, with 2018 revenue of \$1.15 billion, and employing 3,500 across in several states across the country. The second and third generations of Bill’s family – including those who continue to guide the business – have inherited his tenacity for perfection, integrity, and the same Christian values that are the foundation of the company.

House Bill 15 is one small way that we can honor Bill’s contributions to the State of Ohio. The designated stretch of State Route 13 spans the Village of Fredericktown, as well as passes the company’s maintenance operations facility. Although Bill Burgett passed away in November 2015 at age 85, this highway designation would create a permanent and deserving landmark, serving as an important symbol of pride for the Burgett family, the Village of Fredericktown, and for the approximately 200 Kokosing employees in Knox County.

Chairman Baldrige and members of this committee, thank you again for allowing me to provide testimony, and I would be happy to answer any questions.