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Chairman Baldrige, Vice-Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy and to all of the members on the Transportation and Public Safety Committee, I am honored to be able to offer you proponent testimony today for House Bill 220, Legislation that would create a University of Alabama specialty license plate. Furthermore, and I want to thank Representative Bird from the 66th House District, for his sponsorship of this legislation.

I am a 2013 graduate of the University of Alabama's School of Law's LLM (Master of Law) Program in Taxation. This degree has served me well both professionally and I suspect played a key consideration with respect to my former appointment as Ranking Member to the Ways and Means Committee.

While an ardent Buckeye fan and a former season ticket holder while also a graduate of the University of Alabama's School of Law, I, like all graduates of higher educational institutions, serve in some capacity as an ambassador for their respective schools. Here in Ohio, Alabama has upwards of 2000 graduates with an alumni that continues to grow. An Alabama license plate will help provide added financial assistance to Ohio applicants wishing to travel south for an excellent educational opportunity.

Former State Representative Margy Conditt, (R) of Liberty Twp. in Butler County, also a Graduate of the University of Alabama, broached the subject of this legislation with me while serving in the House. That conversation led to my introduction of similar legislation in the 133rd General Assembly. Today, I am pleased that the House is once again considering the creation of a University of Alabama license plate. In the meantime, Ohio's contingent of Alabama graduates continue with their efforts circulating petitions in hope of seeing the availability of a school related license plate become a reality.

The proposal for an out of state school is not without precedent (Notre Dame in South Bend). Indeed, Ohio offers more than 300 specialty license plates and the purchase of these plates generate funds for worthy causes, bring awareness to important issues or someone to display school pride.

With a history of collegiate coaching greats including the likes of Jim Tressel, Urban Meyer and Nick Saban, all having strong and competitive roots here in Ohio, the idea seemed a natural. When Kent State was invited to play Alabama a few years back in the Bryant-Denny Stadium, the team's players spent the week together with the Tide, helping the victims of the tornado that had decimated parts of Tuscaloosa.

The University of Alabama's campus is beautiful, the education offered is nationally recognized and the school offers a tremendous opportunity to those who select the University to pursue their degree.

In closing I want to thank the Committee for both its willingness to once again consider this legislation and the opportunity to offer you my written testimony in support of House Bill 220. Your support for this legislation would be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Respectfully submitted,