

Ohio House Committee on Transportation and Public Safety
Representative Michael Sheehy
H.B. 465 Sponsor Testimony
February 15, 2022

Chairman Baldrige, Vice-Chair McClain, and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide sponsor testimony in support of House Bill 465, which would establish requirements regarding Department of Transportation projects, specifically as they relate to schools and school zones.

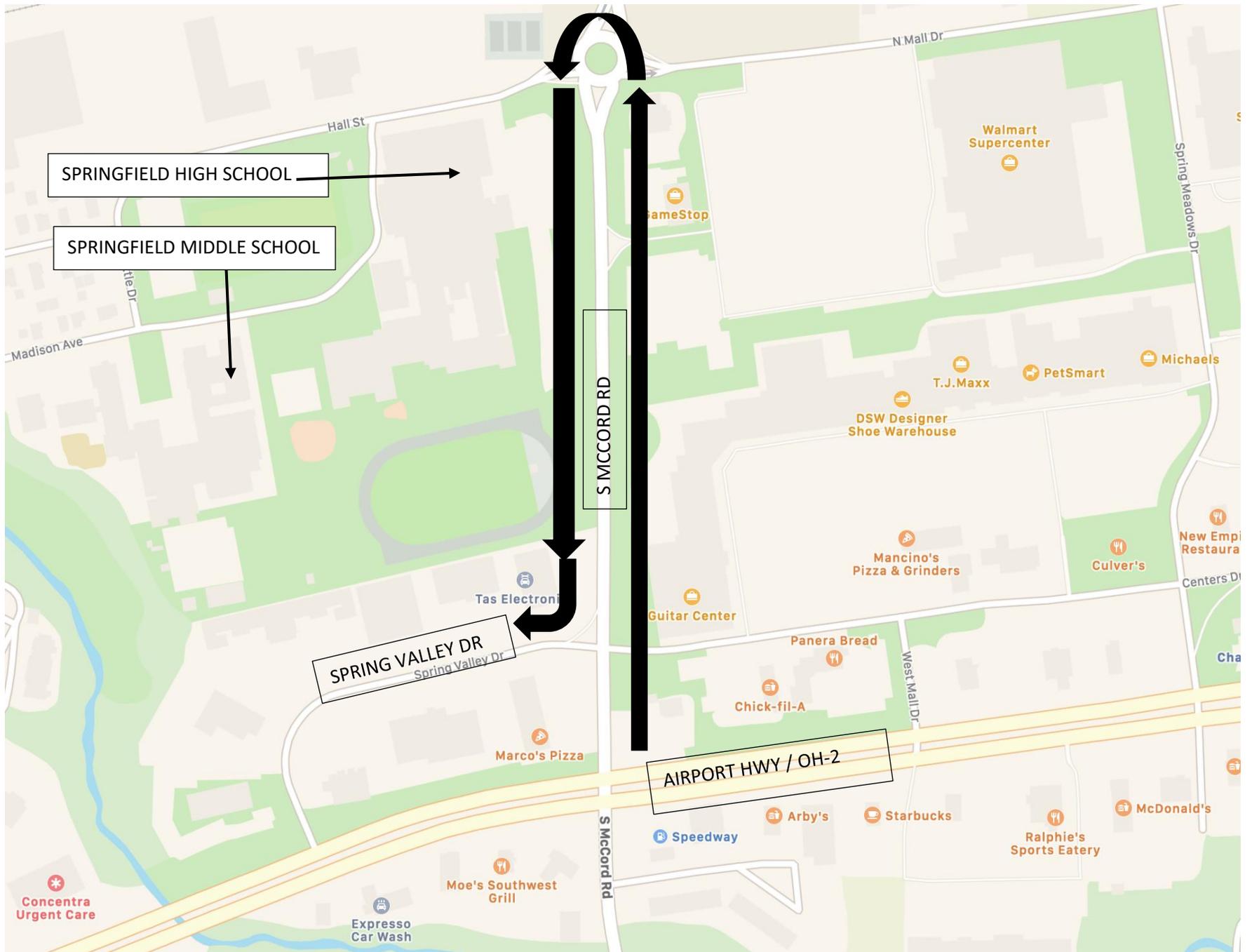
This legislation was derived from an ongoing issue in my district concerning an intersection off Airport Highway, or OH Route 2, in Holland, Ohio. In 2019, the DeWine administration included the intersection of Airport Highway and McCord Road on a list of 150 intersections statewide that were flagged for safety improvements. This intersection ranked 23rd on a list of the 50 most accident-prone intersections in suburban areas.¹

My testimony includes a map that may help you follow along with the specifics of this issue. ODOT has developed a \$2.17 million plan that would prohibit all but one left turn at the intersection of South McCord Road and Spring Valley Drive. Our office has been contacted by several business owners on Spring Valley Drive who are opposed to this plan, as many of their customers use the left hand turn from northbound South McCord Road to get to their stores. Once construction on this project is finished, traffic utilizing this route will be re-directed north to a roundabout outside Springfield High School. The Springfield Local School District has also voiced their opposition to the plan, citing the increased traffic through a school safety zone. These groups have reached out to compromise on another plan that would keep the left-hand turn lane, but have not been able to find common ground. Local business owners, school officials, and consumers have felt as though their voices have not been heard through this process.

It is my hope that House Bill 465 will ensure that those who are impacted by major construction projects can use their voice in a meaningful way. HB 465 requires ODOT to notify the general community and offer an opportunity for appropriate public involvement before making any significant changes to any street or roadway. The bill also requires ODOT to notify any school that will be impacted by these projects. Finally, this bill requires any person preparing a traffic safety study for ODOT to consider the impact of a proposed project on traffic through a designated school zone, and evaluate any increase or decrease of traffic through a designated school zone.

While this proposal won't directly affect the issue in my district, House Bill 465 will increase accountability and transparency as ODOT continues to upgrade Ohio's critical infrastructure. Thank you for your consideration – my joint sponsor would like to provide more details about this proposal.

¹ <https://www.toledoblade.com/local/transportation/2021/12/31/odot-moves-forward-with-controversial-mccord-road-project/stories/20211230140>



SPRINGFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

SPRINGFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL

SPRING VALLEY DR
Spring Valley Dr

S MCCORD RD

AIRPORT HWY / OH-2