



Representative Scott Wiggam

1<sup>st</sup> House District

Chairman Hoagland, Vice Chair Johnson, and members of the Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on House Bill 29.

The purpose of this legislation is to recognize members of the United States Public Health Service commissioned corps, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Space Force as veterans under Ohio Law, as they already are under federal law, and allow them to obtain state veteran ID cards. While many of us are familiar with Space Force, few of us are familiar with the Public Health Service and NOAA. In Ohio there are approximately 1000 active duty members and veterans between these two branches that are currently unable to obtain identification for their service.

While they are the smallest branches of the uniformed services, both the USPHS and NOAA each service significant tasks. The Public Health Service has been in existence since 1889 is tasked with the mission of safeguarding our national health. NOAA, in its current state, has been in existence since 1970, however its predecessor the U.S. Coast and Geodetic survey corps was in existence from 1917 to 1970 and has been tasked to understand and predict the weather for the protection of everyone. Members of USPHS and NOAA have also been tasked with taking up arms during World War II, taking on missions in both the European and Pacific theaters with tasks ranging from caring for the wounded, conducting land surveys, and forecasting the weather for military operations. While they might no longer take up arms, these members' duties have continued with over 900 officers serving alongside other branches of the

military in Iraq and Afghanistan. Members of the USPHS have even served as aide-de-camps to both General MacArthur and Fleet Admiral Nimitz.

This bill passed with strong bi-partisan support on the House floor. I respectfully ask for your support of this legislation. Thank you all for your time and I am happy to answer any questions at this time.

## **Q & A:**

### **If NOAA was established in 1970 how did they serve in WW2?**

While NOAA was established in 1970 it is a direct descendent of U.S. Coast and Geodetic surveys Corps that was establish in 1917 and served both in World War 1 and 2.

### **What benefits do these ID cards have?**

They identify you as a veteran, so no more carrying around Military IDs.

They are an Ohio authorized form of identification.

They can be used as identification for voting.

The ID cards also contain lists of important information for the veteran including the phone numbers for the Ohio Department of Veterans Service, and the veterans crisis line.

### **How does someone obtain a veteran ID card?**

- 1.) Providing a copy of military discharge, for USPHS it is the PHS Form 1867 and for NOAA it is the NOAA Form 56-16  
Under current law there are 77 acceptable type of discharge paperwork with the most common being the DD-214 and NGB 22.  
(Only Dishonorable discharge is not accepted.)
- 2.) Must provide two forms of current and valid identification, one must have a photograph of the individual.
- 3.) Pay the fee established by the county commissioners that cannot exceed \$2