Representative Darrell Kick
70th House District

Sponsor Testimony – HB 765

Chair Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Holmes, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 765, legislation that would designate the Monarch butterfly as our state butterfly.

During the summer, I was contacted by an elementary school Intervention Specialist in my district. Along with a colleague, she wrote a grant for a butterfly habitat that was installed at their school. Students were able to observe the metamorphosis first-hand and release the butterflies once they matured. This learning activity led the children to wonder if Ohio had a state butterfly and upon researching, they found that we do not.

These bright students learned how a bill becomes a law, then researched and presented three butterflies to their school. Once the school voted on the butterfly that they felt would best represent our state, a math teacher helped them utilize their math skills to plot the votes. Persuasive letters were then sent to my office asking for the legislation to be introduced.

 Forty-six states have designated state insects and some of those happen to be butterflies; however, our state insect is the ladybug, leaving an opening for a state butterfly. So why should we choose the Monarch? One of the reoccurring themes in the letters I received was the

appearance of the Monarch, noting that their delicate wings are reminiscent of stained glass. Although beautiful, their wings are a defense mechanism warning predators that they are poisonous. Their poison comes from their diet of milkweed, which they find abundant in Ohio. The Monarch butterflies can be found in every county in the state and have the longest lifespan of all Ohio butterflies. It would be fitting for us to designate a butterfly that is beautiful like our great state and tough like our citizens as our state butterfly.

Thank you Chair Anielski and members of the committee for your time. I'd be happy to answer any questions you many have.