**Sponsor Testimony for House Bill 106**

**House Transportation and Public Safety Committee**

**March 12, 2019**

Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank you for allowing my colleague, Rep. Sheehy, and me to come before you today and present sponsor testimony on House Bill 106. This bill is identical to HB 293 of the 132nd GA, which passed out of this committee with a vote of 11 to 3.

Over the past 5 years, approximately 38,000 fatalities and injuries have occurred in Ohio teen driver crashes. Ohio is now 7th in the Country for the highest number of teen fatality and injury crashes according to the annual report by Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety. As driving conditions have drastically changed in the last 20 years, Ohio’s young drivers license system has not kept pace.

HB 106 would make Ohio’s roads safer by giving teen drivers more experience behind the wheel through two small, but important adjustments to the current licensing system. The bill would lengthen the temporary instruction permit phase from 6 months to 12 months and would ensure teen drivers are supervised while driving after 10 p.m. (not a curfew) with exemptions for work, school, and religious activities. The current law of a 6-month learners permit is far to short. For example, if a teen’s birthday is in April, then when they receive their license they will almost assuredly never have driven in any snow or ice. As you all know, Ohio experiences all 4 seasons and we need to ensure our teens are fully prepared before turning them loose on the roads without an experienced driver. Driving is a privilege, not a right and we owe it to our kids and others on the road to make sure they are adequately trained.

A modern young driver licensing system is a proven effective strategy for reducing teen driver crashes, making travel safer for young drivers and everyone who shares the roads with them. Ohio's system for licensing young drivers needs to keep up with the latest research on teen driver crashes and how to prevent them. Young driver crash rates in Ohio remain unnecessarily high and have rapidly increased in recent years.

This bill has strong support from many organizations including, but not limited to: Ohio Conference of AAA Clubs, Ohio PTA, Nationwide Insurance, Law Enforcement, State Farm Insurance, State Auto, Better Ohio Teen Drivers, DRVN, Nationwide Children’s Hospital and the American Property and Casualty Insurance Association.

Once again, Chairman Green and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on behalf of HB 106. We would be happy to answer any questions.