Ohio House of Representatives

Transportation and Public Safety Committee

Sponsor Testimony: HB106

Representative Michael Sheehy

Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, and my fellow Transportation and Public Safety Committee members, I’d like to thank you for allowing us to speak on behalf of House Bill 106, which constitutes a smart step forward towards modernizing our licensing system.

Technology is changing our roads in ways we haven’t seen since the invention of the automobile itself. Automated vehicles, instant communication, and connected infrastructure now signal a revolution in the way we drive, but with these advances come challenges for which we must prepare ourselves.

Our bill, brought forward by an incredible coalition of parents, students, and healthcare professionals, will double the amount of time young drivers spend learning under the guidance of more experienced drivers.

As a result of a bipartisan proposal built on compromise, it will also establish a more effective nighttime protection time for when newly licensed drivers can be on the road with a parent or guardian that still protects the ability of families to go about their daily lives.

The changes we’re making to an outdated driver licensing system are minimal compared to the impact we can make. 2014 to 2016 saw a staggering 15% increase in teen driver injuries and fatalities. A failure to act in the face of such a trend would be an unacceptable disservice to our constituents.

As many of my friends here are aware, I am the father of four and all too familiar with the stress that parents take on in teaching their children to drive. I can only imagine the pain felt by so many families who receive the late-night call we all fear, that a child has been injured or killed in a preventable crash.

Upon passage of this bill, we will go home to our own families and rest easy knowing that we are saving lives, offering parents some respite from the stresses of raising a teen, and shielding our communities from the pain of losing a neighbor.

Representative Scherer and I would be happy to field any questions or concerns you may have about this bill.