March 12, 2019

Good morning Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the Transportation and Public Safety Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 82, which would designate the bridge spanning the Maumee River that is part of State Route 109 in Henry County as the "Damascus Bridge."

The area around the Maumee River in Henry County is rich in history going back to the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War and the building of the canal. In 1742, a tribe of Kickapoo Native Americans requested permission from Montreal's Governor to move to a Mascoutin village on both sides of the river. French traders named the wide floodplain "La Prairie des Mascoutins" (The Meadow of the Mascoutin). In 1794, General Anthony Wayne's troops victoriously returned from The Battle of Fallen Timbers and burned "Prairie de Masque." The Treaty of Detroit in 1807 created a hunting reservation to the east, allowing settlers to acquire the surrounding lands. In 1823, all of modern Henry County and portions of other counties became “Damascus” Township of Wood County with Damascus as the county seat. In 1834 this land and the surrounding area was detached from Wood County and became Henry County to honor the life of Patrick Henry. The first bridge in Damascus was built in 1909. The bridge was renovated in 1976 using existing pilings from the prior bridge built in 1909. Due to safety concerns a new bridge was constructed and opened in 2017. Naming this bridge “The Damascus Bridge” would be a wonderful way to mark this important milestone.

Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the Transportation and Public Safety Committee, I thank you for your attention, and I ask for your favorable consideration of House Bill 82.

I will now answer any questions you might have.