**Ohio House Transportation and Public Safety Committee**

**April 30, 2019**

**HB 106 Proponent Testimony**

**Robert Abbott**

Good morning Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the committee, I am Robert Abbott from Granville, Ohio and I support HB106.

I am a father of four teenagers, three of whom have their license and one who is currently preparing for their permit test.

I am also the founder & CEO of DRVN. I have spent the last 3 years focusing on developing a solution to help parents and teens maximize driving experience during the Supervised Driving Period. In our own primary research with Ohio University, we found that parents struggle to find time to practice driving with their teens. We also found that parents often lack a plan for what to cover with their teens on practice drives. Experience is an important factor to driving safety and parents hold most of the responsibility for guiding their teens. By Ohio law, a teen is required to practice with a parent or guardian for 50 hours, and drive with a certified driving instructor for 8 hours. That means that parents are responsible for 86% of required practice driving time during the permit phase.

We created DRVN to help parents and teens track progress toward the required 50 hours and guide skills to cover and increase diversity of driving environments. We know that creates more competent drivers because there is research to support it. A study done by the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia showed a 65% decrease in risky driving behaviors when teens followed a practice program that increased the range of environments and situations.

Extending the permit period to 12 months will give parents and teens more time to navigate this process and increase the opportunities to get at least 50 practice hours and establish an important base of their driving experience. It means that teens *will* have greater exposure to diverse driving environments and weather conditions, especially Winter driving. Establishing a 10 p.m. nighttime driving protection during the first 6 months of licensure will help reduce risk by ensuring teens are not driving unsupervised for non-essential travel during a critical period of skill development.

As a parent, that is reassuring and these reasons are why I’ve decided to support HB 106. With that, I would welcome any questions from the committee.