**Senate General Government & Agency Review Committee**

**Senate Bill 242—Sponsor Testimony**

**Wednesday December 11, 2019**

Chairman Schuring, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member O’Brien, and members of the Senate General Government & Agency Review Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 242.

Senate Bill 242 allows for the state of Ohio to honor Robert G. Heft, the designer of the modern US flag.

As a 17 year old student in Lancaster, Robert G. Heft designed a new 50 star United States flag for a school project, with the thought being that Alaska and Hawaii would soon be admitted to the union. On this project, Mr. Heft received a “B-“, with the promise that the grade would be changed to an “A” if it were to be accepted by Congress in the future. Mr. Heft then sent his design to Ohio Congressman Walter Moeller, who succeeded in lobbying the White House to choose Heft’s design.

Shortly after, Executive Order No. 10834 was signed on August 21, 1959, and President Eisenhower had selected Mr. Heft’s flag out of 1,500 designs that had been submitted for consideration. And yes, Mr. Heft’s teacher made good on his promise and awarded him an “A” on his school project.

Mr. Heft is truly an American icon, with some calling him the modern day version of Betsy Ross. After the flag design, Mr. Heft went on to become a professor at Northwest State Community College in Archbold, Ohio and served the people of Napoleon, Ohio as their mayor for twenty years. Though we lost Mr. Heft just ten years ago, it is my hope that we may forever honor him and his design throughout the state of Ohio.

Thank you once again, Chairman Schuring, and the members of the committee, for the opportunity to present this issue to you today. I will be pleased to answer any questions that the committee may have.