

EVELYN T. RIVERA, Ph.D.
7800 Detroit Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44102
(216) 965-5049 (private cell)

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Dear Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly and members of the State and Local Government committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on House Bill 72:

My name is Evelyn T. Rivera and I am a bilingual Clinical Psychologist of Puerto Rican heritage born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. My father moved to Cleveland after he was drafted from Puerto Rico to fight in the Korean War. He spent three years serving in Korea, Okinawa and Panama. He was sent to fight in the Battle of White Horse Mountain in Korea upon arriving there by ship.

Growing up in Cleveland, I remember asking my teachers where would I have drank during the civil rights movement and the era of segregation. Sadly, no one could answer that question, because the legacy of Latinos living in America is not written in our history books. As you probably are aware, Puerto Ricans are American citizens, yet many Americans do not know this fact due to the lack of Latino American history being taught in our schools. The only thing that I remember learning about Puerto Rico in school was that the island was taken over by the USA after the Spanish American War in 1898 and that we were a Common Wealth of the USA.

Therefore, it is critical that the contribution of people, like my father, and many others who have given their lives to defend and protect our great country be recorded, remembered and celebrated in Ohio. This is why I wholeheartedly support H.B. 72, which will officially commemorate Hispanic Heritage Month in Ohio. Please vote to include us in Ohio's history.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Evelyn Rivera". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Evelyn Rivera, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist