

Thank you Chairman Baldrige, Vice Chair McClain, ranking Member Sheehy, and all members of the Transportation and Public Safety Committee for hearing my testimony on H.B. 710.

Celestino Rivera or Cel as he was so fondly called, grew up in Lorain, enlisted in the Army at 17 and left for Vietnam to serve his country. Upon returning he went on to serve in the Lorain Police Department for 49 years working his way up to Chief of Police. Chief Rivera left an indelible mark on the Lorain Police department. He was the former President of the Fraternal Order of Police, and cared deeply for his community and fellow officers. Chief Rivera was an important part of forming the Lorain Auxiliary police division while in leadership.

Outside of his service for the Lorain Police Department, Cel Rivera was involved in bettering Lorain as a place to live and work. He was on the Lorain County Domestic Violence Task Force, Board Vice-President of Genesis House, a Shelter for Battered Women, a former board member for the Center for Children and Youth Services, and a founding member and Co-Chairman of the Hispanic Fund, to name just a few.

Cel retired and began his new endeavor with his wife Elba of establishing the first Ohio Hispanic Veterans Memorial in Lorain but his life and effort was cut short with his sudden death from a heart attack. Designating a part of State Route 57 in the city of Lorain as “Police Chief Cel Rivera Memorial Highway” is just a portion of what we can do to thank this man for his service to the community of Lorain.

I would like to again thank Chair Baldrige, Vice Chair McClain, ranking member Sheehy, and all members of the Transportation and Public Safety committee for hearing my testimony this morning.