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Committees:

Aviation and Aerospace (Chair)

JMOC (Chair)

Pensions

Public Health Policy

Public Utilities

Technology and Innovation

State Representative Adam Holmes

97th House District of Ohio

House Bill 254 Sponsor Testimony

Chair Roemer, Vice Chair Lorenz, Ranking Member Troy, and the entire Ways and Means committee, thank you for letting us introduce HB 254.

Rep Richardson and I have been discussing this legislation for quite awhile and after much deliberation decided that now was the best time to bring this issue to the Ways and Means committee for three reasons.

1. We wanted to do something for economically constrained veterans during this unique period in property tax escalation. We're all aware of the rise in property taxes headed our way and we thought that this policy would help our disabled veterans weather this dramatic rise in property taxes, especially those on fixed incomes like our 100% disabled.
2. We're always on the lookout for strengthening policies that support veterans to ensure Ohio maintains its reputation as one of America's most veteran friendly state. Policies like HB 254 can really provide incentives for veterans to relocate

here, and in this current economic and tax environment, prevent them from leaving. One of our greatest challenges as a state is growing the population needed for the “once in a generational” economic growth opportunity ahead of us. We want to encourage veterans who are able to fill workforce requirements here in Ohio as they can to stay or to move in and join the team.

3. We’re perceptive of a general decline in patriotism across American culture. The current facts are sobering. [In a speech in April, Ashish Vazirani, deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness](#), said that the percentage of American adults reporting high confidence in the military as an institution had dropped from 74% in 2018 to 64% in 2022. Additionally, during that same time period, American youth between the ages of 16-21 with a favorable impression dropped from 46% to 35%. Finally, the United States Army, Navy and Air Force all missed their 2023 recruiting goals this year (85%, 80% and 90% respectively). These are unhealthy trends for our nation and Rep Richardson and I thought this might be one of multiple things we can do as the Ohio legislature to turn this national mood around.

We have deep respect for the Way and Means Committee responsibilities and look forward to working with you cooperatively to correctly shape this bill to best support Ohio priorities and our honored disabled veterans.