



Ohio Legislative Report

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July 2024

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Ohio Legislative Report

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Statehouse Happenings

Summer break has now begun and that means the 135th General Assembly will not return to full operations again until some time in the fall – probably after the November Elections. In June both chambers were very busy trying to get as many bills as they could through committees and passed in session. Here is a week-by-week look at the June activity of the many 'veteran/military' bills while in committees.

June 3-7

The House Civil Justice Committee had House Bill 212 on its agenda Tuesday afternoon. HB 212 would amend sections of the Revised Code to prohibit foreign adversaries and certain businesses from owning real property in Ohio and to name this act the Ohio Property Protection Act. It was introduced by Representatives **Angela N. King** (District 84) and **Roy Klopfenstein** (District 82) in June of last year. It is on our list because according to the LCS's Local Impact Statement, under the bill, protected property includes real property within a 25-mile radius of (1) an installation under United States armed forces jurisdiction, or (2) a critical infrastructure facility. It was the fourth hearing for the bill and no one was present to give testimony, however written testimony had been submitted from Scott Williams, Chief Executive Officer of Ohio REALTORS as an interested party. In his testimony, Williams pointed out that a similar bill enacted in Florida is having legal problems and Ohio could face similar challenges.

Later on Tuesday the House Ways and Means Committee held the sixth hearing for House Bill 378 which was introduced back in January by Representatives **Brian Lorenz** (District 60) and **Nick Santucci** (District 64). The bill would amend the Revised Code to authorize a full homestead exemption for surviving spouses of members of the uniformed services killed in the line of duty. Representative Lorenz offered three amendment to the bill and the committee agreed to them and the amended bill was favorably passed (12-1). The amendments would disallow a spouse if they remarry and a spouse who cohabitates with another unrelated person. The bill passed on the house floor the next week with a vote of 90 to 1.

On Wednesday the House Homeland Security Committee met and was scheduled to hear testimony and possibly vote on House Bill 232. The bill would amend the Revised Code to create the "Historical and Patriotic Education" license plate. The special plate would generate \$20. for the Ohio Society, Sons of the American Revolution. The Society would be required to use the contributions for special projects related to historical education. Representatives **Jamie Callender** (District 57) and **Mike Loychik** (District 65) introduced the bill June 29th a year ago. There was no testimony and the bill was favorably passed out of committee with a vote of 7 to 1.

See Happenings on Page Eight...

BILLS & RESOLUTIONS INTRODUCED IN JUNE

HB 620:

Introduced by Representative **Roy Klopfenstein** (District 82) on June 3rd.
It was referred to the House Transportation Committee.

The bill would enact section 5534.848 of the Revised Code to designate U.S. 24 in Paulding County as the "Paulding County Purple Heart Memorial Highway."

HB 621:

Introduced by Representative **Roy Klopfenstein** (District 82) on June 3rd.
It was referred to the House Transportation Committee.

The bill would enact section 5534.849 of the Revised Code to designate U.S. 30 in Van Wert County as the "Van Wert County Veteran's Memorial Highway."

HB 625:

Introduced by Representative **Al Cutrona** (District 58) on June 3rd.
It was referred to the House Homeland Security Committee.

This bill would amend sections 4501.21 and 4503.583 and to enact section 4503.896 of the Revised Code to create the "American Legion Auxiliary" license plate and to revise the requirements for the issuance of the "American Legion" license plate.

SB 282:

Introduced by Senator **Stephanie Kunze** (District 16) on June 4th.
It was referred to the Senate Transportation Committee.

The bill would enact section 5534.642 of the Revised Code to designate a portion of I-270 in Franklin County as the "PFC Henry 'Rick' Hausman, Jr. Memorial Highway."

SB 285:

Introduced by Senator **Shane Wilkin** (District 17) on June 4th.
It was referred to the Senate Transportation Committee.

The bill would enact section 5534.703 of the Revised Code to designate a portion of State Route 554 in Gallia County as the "Pharmacist's Mate Third Class Willard L. Shupe Memorial Highway."

HB 628:

Introduced by Representative **Josh Williams** (District 41) on June 12th.
It was referred to the House Transportation Committee.

The bill would enact section 5534.617 of the Revised Code to designate a portion of I-280 in Lucas County as the "SSG Jack W. Coy Memorial Highway."

SB 288:

Introduced by Senator **Matt Dolan** (District 24) on June 17th.
It was referred to the Senate Finance Committee.

The bill would make certain supplemental operating appropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2025.

SB 292:

Introduced by Senator **Matt Dolan** (District 24) on June 17th.
It has not been referred to a committee.

The bill would amend sections 164.01, 164.05, 164.051, 164.06, 164.08, 164.14, and 164.26 of the Revised Code and to amend Sections 307.80 and 423.120 of H.B. 33 of the 135th General Assembly to provide authorization and

Continued on next Page...

conditions for the operation of certain state programs, to make capital appropriations and reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2026, to make other appropriations, and to declare an emergency.

HB 629:

Introduced by Representative **Jay Edwards** (District 94) on June 17th. It was referred to the House Finance Committee.

The bill would amend sections 164.01, 164.05, 164.051, 164.06, 164.08, 164.14, and 164.26 of the Revised Code and to amend Sections 307.80 and 423.120 of H.B. 33 of the 135th General Assembly to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of certain state programs, to make capital appropriations and reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2026, to make other appropriations, and to declare an emergency.

HB 631:

Introduced by Representative **Jon Cross** (District 83) on June 17th. It was referred to the House Transportation Committee.

The Bill would enact section 5534.665 of the Revised Code to designate a portion of State Route 273 in Hardin County as the "Major David McGue Memorial Highway."

OPINIONS

Bills Would Tell Active Military ‘Welcome to Ohio’

Written in last year’s state operating budget was a new program. The program was created through the joint efforts of the offices of Governor Mike DeWine and Treasurer Robert Sprague and it took effect in January. The program, officially called the *Homeownership Savings Linked Deposit Program*, provides above-market interest rate accounts at an eligible savings institution that are to be used for the down payment and closing costs associated with buying a home. Known as “Ohio Homebuyer Plus”,

the savings program is designed to help more Ohioans realize the dream of homeownership.

In addition to higher-yield savings accounts, the program offers some tax-related benefits as well. The interest earned on the accounts is exempt from state income tax and accountholders and their family members may claim a personal income tax deduction for contributions made to the accounts.

To participate in the program, an individual must 18 years of age and be a resident of Ohio. They must apply for a homeownership savings account at an eligible savings institution and certify on the application that the funds in the homeownership savings account shall be used exclusively for eligible home costs.

There are more than 6,700 active-duty men and women who reside in Ohio. Because they are not residents of Ohio, they would not be

Continued on next Page...

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Ohio Legislative Report welcomes letters to the editor.

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IN OTHER STATES

From the Washington State Legislature

The following bill was passed into law March 7, 2024...

HB 2014 (a synopsis)

Qualifying Discharge.

The term "qualifying discharge" is added to provisions establishing various benefit programs for veterans, generally replacing references to "honorable discharge." "Qualifying discharge" is defined as:

- a discharge with an honorable characterization of service;
- a discharge with a general under honorable conditions characterization of service;
- a discharge with an other than honorable characterization of service if the applicant provides certain documentation from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs showing eligibility for or receipt of monetary benefits; or
- any characterization of service if the reason for discharge was listed as due to:
 - a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression;
 - statements, consensual sexual conduct, or consensual acts relating to sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression; or
 - the disclosure of statements, conduct, or acts relating to sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression to military officials.

eligible to participate in Ohio Homebuyer Plus. It could keep them from realizing their dream of homeownership.

If Treasurer Sprague, State Representatives **Nick Santucci** (District 64) and **Brian E. Lampton** (District 70), and State Senators **Brian M. Chavez** (District 30) and **Terry Johnson** (District 14) have their way, that roadblock will be removed, and participation in Ohio Homebuyer Plus will be possible for them.

Chavez and Johnson introduced Senate Bill 257 on May 1. Santucci and Lampton followed on May 6 with House Bill 517. These companion bills will correct the current law by allowing a member of the uniformed services, on active -duty military who reside in another state but are stationed in Ohio to participate in Ohio Homebuyer Plus.

The legislation will encourage the men and women stationed in Ohio to purchase a house, put down roots, and become a permanent part of their communities. It will send a clear message to them that Ohio wants them and welcomes them.

HB 517 passed out of committee on June 25. SB 257 passed out of committee as well and also passed in senate session on the same day. We hope this legislation will continue to progress quickly through the general assembly and land on the governors desk and receive his signature.

OLR is in full support of HB 517 and SB 257.

ELECTION DAY

Tuesday, November 5th

Oct. 07: Deadline for voter registration for Nov. 5 general election (30 days before general election)

Oct. 08: Early in-person absentee voting begins (first day after close of voter registration)

Oct. 29: Applications for absentee ballots to be mailed for Nov. 5 general election must be received by boards of elections by the close of business (7 days before general election)

Nov. 05: General Election Day. -Polls open from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Absentee ballots, returned in person or via a method other than U.S. Mail, must be received by the boards of elections by close of polls

Reflections

"I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; I will not refuse to do the something I can do."

- Helen Keller, 1950

Legislation In The 135th Ohio General Assembly

Pertaining to Ohio Veterans, Active Duty, Reserve & National Guard, and Their Families

- HB 2 Direct state funds for economic growth and community development
- HB 18 Allow military license plate applicant present county veterans ID
- HB 33 Establishes operating appropriations for fiscal years 2024-2025
- HB 53 Authorize refundable tax credits for hiring certain veterans
- HB 57 Index the homestead exemption to inflation
- HB 60 Increase amount of and expand the homestead exemption
- HB 69 Revise membership of county veterans service commissions
- HB 90 Authorize property tax exemption for disabled veterans, spouses
- HB 123 Designate Honor and Remember flag to honor fallen service members
- HB 126 Expand municipal income tax exemption for military pay
- HB 131 Designate Army SSgt. Charles V. Kettler Memorial Highway
- HB 132 Designate Army Sgt. Herbert C. Linville Memorial Highway
- HB 133 Designate Army Sgt. Ronnie Blair Memorial Highway
- HB 150 Prohibit rental discrimination based on lawful source of income
- HB 202 Designate Specialist Dennis Alan Combs Memorial Highway
- HB 212 Enact the Ohio Property Protection Act
- HB 231 Establish 9-8-8 suicide prevention, mental health telephone line
- HB 232 Create Historical and Patriotic Education license plate
- HB 242 Establish the Armed Forces Reserve Component Scholarship Program and related funds
- HB 250 Revise the Military Enlistment diploma seal
- HB 252 Designate SM1 Cornelius Anthony McCafferty, Jr. Memorial Highway
- HB 253 Designate Brigadier General Charles Young Memorial Historical Corridor
- HB 254 Expand and enhance the homestead property tax exemption for disabled veterans
- HB 269 Designate Sgt Bradley J. Harper USMC Memorial Highway
- HB 286 Designate Vienna Township Veterans Bridge
- HB 294 Designate Delaware County Veteran's Memorial Highway
- HB 299 Designate Specialist Five Frederick Wayne Taylor Memorial Highway
- HB 310 Regards STRS member purchase of military service credit
- HB 317 Designate Sgt. Cory M. Endlich Corridor
- HB 335 Designate Ottawa Cuntly Veterans Memorial Highway
- HB 350 Designate Lance Corporal Austin B. Schwenk Memorial Highway
- HB 355 Designate Licking County Veterans Memorial Highway
- HB 365 Designate multiple memorial highways
- HB 378 Permit homestead exemption-surviving spouses of service members
- HB 409 Create the Ohio Cold War Victory Medal
- HB 423 Create "Blue Star Banner" license plate

More Legislation on the NEXT PAGE...

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- HB 431 Designate Staff Sgt. Zachary Wobler Memorial Highway
 HB 447 Regards property tax exemptions, restrictions and land value
 HB 453 Designate Staff Sergeant George P. Mizik (USMC) Memorial Highway
 HB 458 To designate "Gold and Blue Star Family Memorial Bridge" and "POW/MIA Memorial Viaduct."
 HB 483 Create "Save a Warrior" license plate
 HB 487 Designate TSgt. Grover Lee Swearingen Memorial Highway
 HB 493 Designate Lance Corporal Gerald Subler Memorial Highway
 HB 494 Designate SSgt Gene F. Morrison Memorial Bridge
 HB 510 Designate Army Lt. Col. Robert R. Melnick Memorial Highway
 HB 517 Allow military to participate in homeownership savings program
 HB 523 Regards info poster on benefits and services for veterans
 HB 611 Designate U.S. Army Private First Class Jerry Bockbrader Mem Hwy
 HB 620 Designate Paulding County Purple Heart Memorial Highway
 HB 621 Designate Van Wert County Veteran's Memorial Highway
 HB 625 Regards American Legion Auxiliary, American Legion license plates
 HB 628 Designate SSG Jack W. Coy Memorial Highway
 HB 629 Make capital appropriations and reappropriations
 HB 631 Designate Major David McGue Memorial Highway
- HR 95 Urge Congress to extend GI Bill benefits
 HR 189 Honoring Thomas Mihalis Memorial Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1079 on its Centennial
 HR 221 Honoring Dan Shroyer as a 2023 National Veterans Golden Age Games Champion
 HR 222 Honoring Dr. John Eichelberger as a 2023 National Veterans Golden Age Games Champion
 HR 258 Honoring American Legion DeWitt McConnell Post 235 on its Centennial
 HR 302 Honoring Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1090 on its Centennial
 HR 316 Honoring Jay Wilson American Legion Post 112 on its Centennial
 HR 431 Observing April 2024 as the Month of the Military Child in Ohio
 HR 434 Honoring American Legion Toledo Post 335 on its Centennial
- HCR 8 To urge the federal government to select Ohio for the permanent headquarters of the U.S. Space Command
 HCR 9 Adopt Restoration of America's Readiness (ROAR) Resolution
- SB 12 Regards veteran-owned business enterprise certification program
 SB 14 Expand veteran eligibility to teach without license
 SB 15 Authorize Military License Plate Program permanent registration
 SB 43 Modify homestead exemption-surviving spouse of a disabled veteran
 SB 45 Designate Veterans Memorial Bridge in Trumbull County
 SB 63 Require plaintiff in asbestos claim to file specified disclosures
 SB 64 Expand Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program
 SB 110 Designate Sgt. Anthony Kress Vinnedge Memorial Highway
 SB 113 Regards failure to comply with Military Selective Service System
 SB 114 Designate Lance Corporal James F. Kimple Memorial Highway
 SB 134 Modifies homestead property tax exemption for disabled veterans
 SB 140 Designate Sgt. Todd M. Bates Memorial Highway
 SB 141 Designate American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. Memorial Highway
 SB 145 Designate Cpl. David A. Johnston Memorial Highway
 SB 152 Designate Cpl. Jack O. McClure Memorial Highway
 SB 154 Include Space Force in armed forces, armed and uniformed service
 SB 167 Designate Marine Corporal Tim W. Russell Highway
 SB 169 Designate Cortland Veterans Memorial Bridge
 SB 183 Designate Lance Corporal James Patrick Rizzo Memorial Highway

Continued on next Page...

- SB 191 Designate PFC Richard 'Rick' Wesley McFarland Memorial Highway
- SB 208 To require a military exception in an open enrollment policy
- SB 225 To designate September 22 as Veterans Suicide Awareness and Prevention Day
- SB 226 Enact the Ohio Property Protection Act
- SB 257 Allow military to participate in homeownership savings program
- SB 260 Designate SPC Connor Wilson-Reichert Memorial Highway
- SB 281 Regards info poster on benefits and services for veterans
- SB 285 Designate Pharmacist's Mate Third Class Willard L. Shupe Mem Hwy
- SB 288 Make supplemental operating appropriations
- SB 292 Make capital appropriations and reappropriations

- SR 171 Honoring Thomas Mihalys Memorial VFW Post 1079 as it commemorates its One Hundredth Anniversary
- SR 262 In memory of Senior Airman Brian "Kody" Johnson
- SR 315 Recognizing the Month of the Military Child in Ohio, April 2024

- SCR 8 Urge federal govt reduce processing time- veteran disability claim
- SCR 9 Urge Congress support military, veteran mental health treatment

OHIO CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I, BILL OF RIGHTS

SECTION # 10A ~ RIGHTS OF VICTIMS OF CRIME

Effective: 1917

(A) To secure for victims justice and due process throughout the criminal and juvenile justice systems, a victim shall have the following rights, which shall be protected in a manner no less vigorous than the rights afforded to the accused:

- (1) to be treated with fairness and respect for the victim's safety, dignity and privacy;
- (2) upon request, to reasonable and timely notice of all public proceedings involving the criminal offense or delinquent act against the victim, and to be present at all such proceedings;
- (3) to be heard in any public proceeding involving release, plea, sentencing, disposition, or parole, or in any public proceeding in which a right of the victim is implicated;
- (4) to reasonable protection from the accused or any person acting on behalf of the accused;
- (5) upon request, to reasonable notice of any release or escape of the accused;
- (6) except as authorized by section 10 of Article I of this constitution, to refuse an interview, deposition, or other discovery request made by the accused or any person acting on behalf of the accused;
- (7) to full and timely restitution from the person who committed the criminal offense or delinquent act against the victim;

- (8) to proceedings free from unreasonable delay and a prompt conclusion of the case;
- (9) upon request, to confer with the attorney for the government; and
- (10) to be informed, in writing, of all rights enumerated in this section.

(B) The victim, the attorney for the government upon request of the victim, or the victim's other lawful representative, in any proceeding involving the criminal offense or delinquent act against the victim or in which the victim's rights are implicated, may assert the rights enumerated in this section and any other right afforded to the victim by law. If the relief sought is denied, the victim or the victim's lawful representative may petition the court of appeals for the applicable district, which shall promptly consider and decide the petition.

(C) This section does not create any cause of action for damages or compensation against the state, any political subdivision of the state, any officer, employee, or agent of the state or of any political subdivision, or any officer of the court.

(D) As used in this section, "victim" means a person against whom the criminal offense or delinquent act is committed or who is directly and proximately harmed by the commission of the offense or act. The term "victim" does not include the accused or a person whom the court finds would not act in the best interests of a deceased, incompetent, minor, or incapacitated victim.

(E) All provisions of this section shall be self-executing and severable, and shall supersede all conflicting state laws.

(F) This section shall take effect ninety days after the election at which it was approved.

June 10-14

On Tuesday, the House Economic and Workforce Development Committee held the first hearing for House Bill 517. The bill is a companion bill to SB 257 and would amend the Revised Code to make active duty members of the uniformed services eligible to participate in the homeownership savings linked deposit program. Testimony was heard from the bill's primary sponsors, Representatives **Nick Santucci** (District 64) and **Brian E. Lampton** (district 70). "We depend on these individuals for our security, and through House Bill 517, we can help them obtain security for themselves by ensuring that they are



Reps Santucci (l) and Lampton testifying on HB 517

is my hope that by expanding this program to include our service men and women and helping them to purchase homes, we can enable them to put down roots here in Ohio so that they can continue to be valuable contributors to our communities and our great state for many years to come."

The House Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Committee had four pieces of legislation on the agenda that afternoon. First up was SB 113. It would prohibit a person who fails to comply with the Military Selective Service System from holding certain public offices or employment with the state, and require high schools to notify students



Willette (l) and Daniels testify on SB 113

of any obligation to register for the Selective Service System. This bill was introduced by former Senator **Frank Hoagland** in April of last year. It passed out of committee and on the senate floor and was then introduced into the house in October. This was the second hearing in this committee and proponent testimony was given by Bradley Willette, Ohio State Director and Jacob G. Daniels, Deputy Associate Director for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs at the United States Selective Service System. "...I'm concerned that

afforded the resources necessary to purchase a home and to take that step for their future while serving out their assignments here in Ohio," Santucci stated in his testimony. When Lampton gave his testimony he said "It

is my hope that by expanding this program to include our service men and women and helping them to purchase homes, we can enable them to put down roots here in Ohio so that they can continue to be valuable contributors to our communities and our great state for many years to come."

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registration rates for Ohio eighteen-year-olds dropped to 49.7% in 2023. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 73% of Ohio eighteen-year-old men registered with Selective Service System. To return registration rates to prior levels, we need help," Willette said in his testimony. Daniels stated "This bill aligns with federal law that requires registration to be eligible for employment in the Executive Branch. This includes employment with any federal agency, the United States Postal Service, the Census Bureau, AmeriCorps, and Peace Corps. Nineteen states condition state and/or local government employment on registration with Selective Service System."

Next was Senator **Tim Schaffer** (District 20) who gave sponsor testimony on SCR 8 first and then SCR 9. Senate Concurrent Resolution 8 would urge the President of the United States, the Secretary of



Senator Schaffer gives testimony on SCR 8 and SCR 9

Veterans Affairs, and Congress to take prompt action to reduce the processing time for veterans' disability benefit claims. It was introduced in November and it passed unanimously out of committee and on the senate floor before arriving in the house. In his testimony Schaffer said, "The VA describes processing time for claims over 125 days as backlog. Additionally, the number of backlogged claims was at 278,929 claims as of June 8, 2024. It is simply unacceptable to take over four months to process a veteran's disability-related claim, especially in cases where the claim is denied and sent to be appealed. Additionally, the time to process claims should be improving, not getting worse." Senate Concurrent Resolution 9 would urge Congress to support the provision of prompt and comprehensive



Senator Roegner testifies on SB 154

mental health treatment to military personnel and veterans who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and other service-related stress disorders. "When it comes to our nation's military personnel and veterans, we should expect complete and full medical care for those men and women who sacrificed their health and wellbeing for their country," Schaffer said.

The fourth item was Sub SB 154 introduced in September by Senator **Kristine D. Roegner** (District 27). It would update the Revised Code in numerous

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sections to include Space Force in the definition of the armed forces, armed services, and uniformed services of the United States. It had passed out of committee and in the full senate unanimously before being sent to the house.

In the Senate Community Revitalization Committee Senate Bill 257 had a second hearing. The bill would amend the Revised Code to make active duty members of the uniformed services eligible to participate in the homeownership savings linked deposit program. It was introduced by Senators

Brian M. Chavez (District 30) and **Terry Johnson** (District 14) on the first of May. State Treasurer, Robert Sprague said in his testimony, "Seeing as the men and women of our armed forces represent the very best of us, it's only appropriate that those who come to the Buckeye State as part of their military service also have the ability to stay here once that

service is complete. The Ohio Homebuyer Plus program can be a great benefit to them should they wish to plant permanent roots here in Ohio." Also testifying was Scott Weiser, Director of Legislative Affairs for the Ohio Credit Union League. He stated, "This common sense update provides those serving our country with an opportunity to participate in the program if they wish to make Ohio their permanent home." Two other witnesses provided the committee with written only testimony in support of SB 257.

In the Senate Finance Committee, Chairman **Matt Dolan** (District 24) gave sponsor testimony on his capital budget bill, SB 288 informing the members that

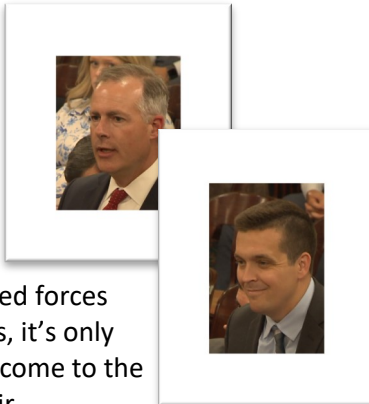


Senator Dolan explains the capital budget plan

hearings would begin the next day. He explained the capital budget process and that SB 288 would contain the senates half of the \$700 million total one time strategic community investment appropriations allocated in the operating budget passed last year. It would be added into the House Capital Budget Bill, HB 2 and passed as one bill.

The next day the committee received written proponent testimony for SB 288 from eight witnesses. There were also some amendments accepted to the bill.

The same day Senate Bill 226 was on the



Sprague (l) and Weiser give testimony on SB 154

agenda on the Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee for a fifth hearing. There were no witnesses. SB 226 is a companion bill to HB 212 –Ohio Property Protection act. Two amendments were made to the bill that addressed the concerns made in the written testimony for HB 212 from Ohio REALTORS the previous week. The committee then voted 5 to 0 for favorable passage. Two weeks later on the 26th, the bill passed in session with a 30 to 1 vote.

June 17-21

The House Economic and Workforce Development Committee heard testimony on Tuesday for HB 517, its second hearing. Giving in person testimony was Zach Prouty, Director of Policy and



Prouty testifies on HB 517

Legislative Affairs for the Ohio Treasurer. "The men and women of our armed forces represent the very best our nation has to offer. By making this simple eligibility change to the Ohio Homebuyer Plus program, we can make it easier for our service members to plant permanent roots here in the Buckeye State following the completion of their military service," Prouty said in his testimony.

Written testimony was also provided by Scott Williams from Ohio REALTORS and Jared Weise of Ohio Credit Union League.

The House Finance Committee also met on Tuesday and heard testimony from Kim Murnieks, Director of Ohio Office of Budget and Management on HB 629. This is another capital budget bill and is almost identical to HB 2 and SB 292. Two days later the Finance Committee held the second hearing for HB 292, There were two amendments offered but the committee tabled both. The only testimony received was written testimony from three witnesses.



Kim Murnieks gives testimony on HB 629 and SB 292

The Senate Finance Committee also met on Tuesday to hear testimony on HB 2 and SB 292. There was written testimony only for HB 2 and that was from the primary sponsors of the bill, Representatives **Al Cutrona** (District 58) and **Terrence Upchurch** (District 20). Senate Bill 292 had its second hearing and Director Murnieks gave the same testimony she gave earlier in the day for HB 629.

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June 24-28

This final week of June was extremely busy as the committees in both chambers tried to pass as many bills as they could. A total of 16 of our pieces of legislation were scheduled in six different committees on Tuesday and two more pieces on Wednesday.

The final hearings for HB 2 and SB 292 were held in the Senate Finance Committee on Tuesday. There was an amendment to make some technical changes to SB 292. Then an amendment was accepted to eliminate everything in House Bill 2 and relace it with the language in the newly amended Senate Bill 292. That made it Substitute House Bill 2 and it had everything in it that the both the house and senate had passed. The committee then voted to favorably (11 to 0) pass the bill out of committee. The next day the Senate voted 31 to 1 to pass the bill and the House concurred with their 92 to 5 vote. Sub HB 2 was sent to Governor DeWine for his signature.

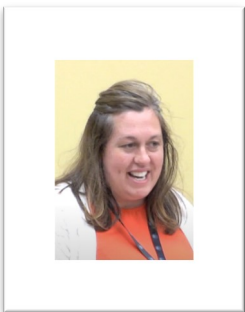
Senate Bill 257 had its third hearing in the Senate Community Revitalization Committee on Tuesday. There were no witnesses and no written testimony so a vote was taken to favorably pass the bill out of committee –it was unanimous. The bill passed 31 to 0 on the senate floor the next day and

was sent over to the house chamber.

In the House Commerce and Labor Committee HB 523 had its first hearing. Representatives **Lauren McNally** (District 59) and **Adam Holmes** (District 97)

introduced the bill in May. The bill would Require the Director of Commerce, in consultation with the Director of Veterans Services, to create a poster

containing information about specified veterans' benefits and services and require the Director to



Rep McNally
testifies on HB 257

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provide an employer with a copy of the poster free of charge at the employer's request. In her testimony McNally stated, "Ohio currently has no requirement that this information be curated or displayed. While HB 523 will not require employers to display the poster, it will create a standardized workplace posting that includes basic information about Veterans' benefits and a way for Veterans to learn more about the programs should an employer who is supportive of our Veterans wish to display the poster and demonstrate that support."

For the third hearing on HB 517, the bill that would allow military to participate in homeownership savings program, there were no witnesses or written testimony. The bill passed favorably out of committee with a 12 to 0 vote.

The House Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Committee started there meeting with Senate Bill 225. There was only written testimony from Tim Hauser of Twinsburg. SB 225 was introduced by Senator **Kristine D. Roegner** (District 27) and would designate September 22 as Veterans Suicide Awareness and Prevention Day. The bill was favorably passed out of committee by a 9 to 0 vote. The next day it passed 97 to 0 on the house floor and was sent to the governor for his signature.

Next on the committees agenda was Sub SB 154 for its second hearing. This is the Roegner bill that would include the Space Force in armed forces, armed and uniformed services throughout the Ohio Revised Code. There was no one to testify and the committee voted 9 to 0 to favorably pass the bill out of committee.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 9 was up for its second hearing. SCR 9 urges Congress to support military, veteran mental health treatment and was sponsored by **Senator Tim Schaffer** (District 20). There were no witnesses and the committee favorably passed it out of committee with a vote of 8 to 0.

The was also no testimony for House Resolution 95 that would urge Congress to enact HR 1255 that would make direct descendants of Black veterans of World War II eligible for Veterans Administration housing loans and education benefits. The resolution is sponsored by Representative **Terrence Upchurch** (District 20) and **Adam C. Miller** (District 6). That was its second hearing.

The House Transportation Committee had the first hearings on seven bill. Six of the bills would designate a portion of a roadway in Ohio as a

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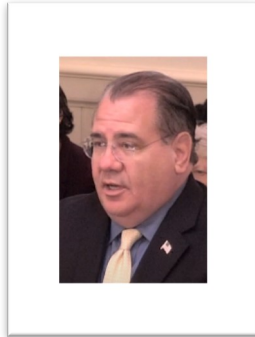
memorial highway. The seventh bill would create a memorial bridge and a memorial viaduct. House Bill 510 was the only bill that had no witnesses and did not pass out of committee. HB 510 is sponsored by Representative **Al Cutrona** (District 58) and would designate a portion of State Route 11 in Mahoning County as the "Army Lt. Col. Robert R. Melnick Memorial Highway."

The other six bill all passed favorably out of committee with unanimous votes. Senator **Tim Schaffer** (District 20) is the sponsor and testified on two bills. SB 114 would designate a portion of United States Route 33 in Fairfield County as the "Lance Corporal James F. Kimple Memorial Highway." and SB 145 would designate a portion of Refugee Road in Fairfield County as the "Cpl. David A. Johnston Memorial Highway."

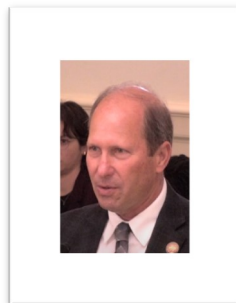
Two of the bills were sponsored by Representative **Roy Klepfenstien** (District 82). HB 620 would designate U.S. 24 in Paulding County as the "Paulding County Purple Heart Memorial Highway." and HB 621 would designate U.S. 30 in Van Wert County as the "Van Wert County Veteran's Memorial Highway." Providing written testimony in support of HB 261 was Kenneth Myers, Commander of the Van Wert American Legion Post 178.

Bill sponsor, Representative **Justin Pizzulli** (District 90) testified for his House Bill 487 which would designate a portion of State Route 41 in Adams County as the "TSgt. Grover Lee Swearingen Memorial Highway." Also saying a few words to the committee members was a son of TSgt. Swearingen.

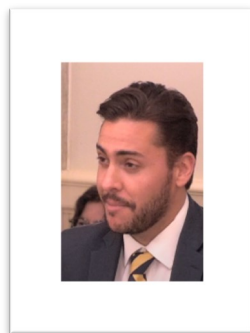
Representative **James M. Hoops** (District 81)



Senator Schaffer gives testimony on SB 114 and SB 145



Rep Klepfenstien testifies on HB 620 and HB 621



Rep Pizzulli give testimony on HB

provided testimony for HB 458 that he introduced in March. The bill would designate a bridge located in the Village of Montpelier, in Williams County, as the "Gold and Blue Star Family Memorial Bridge" and a viaduct spanning the railroad tracks that is a part of State Route 107, also located in the Village of Montpelier as the "POW/MIA Memorial Viaduct."

On Wednesday the Senate Transportation met and two bills were on the agenda that would designate a section of Ohio's roadways in memory of an Ohio Veteran. HB 253 had its 3rd hearing but there were no witnesses. The committee voted 11 to 0 for favorable passage. Later the same day the bill was passed by the full senate with a vote of 31 to 0. The bill sponsored by Representatives **Terrence Upchurch** (District 20) and **Adam Holmes** (District 97).

Senate Bill 282 had sponsor testimony from Senator **Stephanie Kunze** (District 16). Her bill would designate a portion of I-270 in Franklin County as the "PFC Henry 'Rick' Hausman, Jr. Memorial Highway."

Anyone wishing to read any of the testimonies on any of the bills can go to www.legislature.gov and enter the bill number (HB 487 or SB 257) and then click on 'Committee Activity'. You can also watch the committee hearings at www.ohiochannel.org.



Rep Hoops gives testimony on HB 458



Senator Kunze testifies on SB 282

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An idea for a new law or a change in an existing law might originate with a member of the General Assembly, an administrative agency of the state, the Governor, a special interest group, or a private citizen.