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'Ohio Legislative Report'

## Ohio Legislative Report

Is published electronically at the start of each month to report on the latest information about legislative issues taking place in Columbus that could affect the lives of Veterans, Military Personnel, and their families in Ohio.

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Editor: David K. Root

## Statehouse Happenings

Members of the General Assembly were busy 'veteran bills' during October. There were 12 hearings held on 10 bills before 5 different Committees. Here is a rundown of the bills and the hearings.

Introduced during the summer break and referred to the Senate Transportation Committee in September were Senate Bills 140, 141, 145, and 152. They all head sponsor testimony on October 11th. Except for SB 141 all bills would name a section of Ohio roadways in the memory of an individual service member. SB 141 would name a section of highway in honor of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. None of the bills had a second hearing yet.

Senate Bill 113, introduced by Senator **Frank Hoagland** (District 30) is about the failure to comply with Military Selective Service System. He introduced the bill in April of this year, and it was referred to the Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee. Testimony was heard in May from Hoagland and two employees of the United States Selective Service System. In September the committee voted to favorably report the bill. However, it was re-referred to the committee and a substitute bill was drafted. On October 11th the sub bill was favorably reported out of committee and on the same day the senate voted 26 to 4 to pass it. Sub SB 113 was introduced into the house on the 12th and referred to the House Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Committee on the 24th.



Sen. Hoagland testifying before the Veterans and Public Safety Committee

In the House Representatives **Adam C. Miller** (District 60) and Dick Stein (District 54) introduced House Bill 242 July and it was referred to the House Higher Education Committee where it received three hearing during October. The bill would establish the Armed Forces Reserve Component Scholarship Program and related funds beginning on July 1, 2025.



Reps. Richardson and Miranda testify Before the Primary and Secondary Education Committee

House Bill 250 was introduced in August by Representatives **Jessica E. Miranda** (District 28) and **Tracy M. Richardson** (District 86) at the beginning of August. In September it was referred to the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee and the 1st hearing was held. In October a

second hearing for the bill was held. The bill would expand eligibility for the Military Enlistment Seals for high school graduates.

Representative **Marilyn S. John** (District 76) introduced House Bill 252 in

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# **BILLS & RESOLUTIONS INTRODUCED IN OCTOBER**

## **HB 286:**

Introduced by Representative Nick Santucci (District 64) on October 2nd.  
It was referred to the House Transportation Committee.

The bill would enact section 5534.655 of the Revised Code to designate a bridge spanning State Route 11 in Trumbull County as the "Vienna Township Veterans Bridge."

## **SB 167:**

Introduced by Senators Theresa Gavarone (District 2) and Nathan H. Manning (District 13) on October 3rd.  
It was referred to the Senate Transportation Committee.

The bill would enact section 5534.654 of the Revised Code to designate a portion of State Route 60 in Erie County as the "Marine Corporal Tim W. Russell Highway."

## **HB 294:**

Introduced by Representatives Brian Lorenz (District 60) and Beth Lear (District 61) on October 10th.  
It was referred to the House Transportation Committee.

The bill would enact section 5534.653 of the Revised Code to designate a portion of I-71 in Delaware County as the "Delaware County Veteran's Memorial Highway."

## **SB 169:**

Introduced by Senator Sandra O'Brien (District 32) on October 11th.  
As of November 1st, the bill had not been referred to a committee.

The bill would enact section 5534.658 of the Revised Code to designate a bridge spanning Walnut Creek in Trumbull County as the "Cortland Veterans Memorial Bridge."

## **HB 299:**

Introduced by Representative Don Jones (District 95) on October 18th.  
It was referred to the House Transportation Committee.

The Bill would enact section 5534.656 of the Revised Code to designate a portion of State Route 7 in Washington County as the "Specialist Five Frederick Wayne Taylor Memorial Highway."

## **HB 310:**

Introduced by Representative Don Jones (District 95) on October 30th.  
It was referred to the House Pensions Committee.

The bill would amend sections 3307.70, 3307.751, and 3307.752 of the Revised Code regarding purchases of military service credit by State Teachers Retirement System members.

**A bill is a document by which a member of the General Assembly proposes to enact a new law or amend or repeal an existing law. The term "bill" is used to refer to the document from the time it is drafted and delivered to the member until it is considered and approved by both the House and the Senate. After passing both houses, a bill becomes an "act" and must be presented to the Governor for acceptance or rejection. If accepted, or if the Governor does not take any action for ten days, it becomes a "law."**

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.



### **Proclamations to Honor VFW Post Presented**

October 7, 2023

Elyria, Ohio - Representative Gayle Manning presented resolutions from the Ohio Senate and the Ohio House to Post Commander, Walter Lijana (I) and Event Chairman, David K. Root during the banquet at Thomas Mihal's Memorial VFW Post 1079. The post was celebrating 100 years of service to veterans and community.



### **Rep. Adam Miller Assists Flag at Raising**

October 27, 2023

Hilliard, Ohio - Prior to the first-round Division I, Region 3 playoff game between Hilliard Davidson and Grove City, members of the American Legion William R Schnug Memorial Post 614 raised the National Flag and Representative Adam Miller was there to offer his assistance.

## **STATE REPRESENTATIVE BERNIE WILLIS**

### **NOVEMBER 15, 2023**

Representative Bernard Willis will hold a townhall meeting on Wednesday, November 15th at 6 p.m. at Springfield CoHatch.



There was a good turnout for the monthly Veteran Legislative Caucus meeting at the Vern Riffe State Office Tower on Tuesday, October 3rd.

*Ohio Legislative Report* is on facebook

## **National Ohio Day**

On November 2nd each year we celebrate National Ohio Day in recognition of the founding of Ohio as a state.

But wait! If that is true, then what is the holiday on March 1st that is called Ohio Day? Isn't that to celebrate the founding of Ohio as a state?

To set the confusion straight here is what the Ohio History Connection website says... "In November 1802, thirty-five delegates convened to draft an Ohio state constitution. In order for Ohio to become a state in the United States, representatives of the territory had to submit a constitution to the United States Congress for approval. This was the final requirement under the Northwest Ordinance that Ohio had to meet before becoming a state. Thomas Worthington personally carried the document to

Washington, DC. He arrived on December 19, and formally presented the Constitution to Congress on December 22. The Constitution became law on February 19, 1803, when Congress passed an act stating that the citizens of Ohio had adopted a constitution in accordance with the 1802 Enabling Act and the said state had become one of the United States of America."

- ◆ November 2, 1802: When our constitution was drafted.
- ◆ February 28, 1803: When Congress passed the act that enabled Ohio to become a state.
- ◆ March 1, 1803: The first General Assembly met in Chillicothe to complete the transfer from Territory to State.



## IN OTHER STATES

The following bills were passed by the Indiana 123rd General Assembly and signed into law by the governor of Indiana.

Listed are the digest of each bill. To read the full text and follow the actions of the G.A. of each bill go to the Indiana General Assembly website and enter the bill number.

<https://iga.in.gov/legislative/2023/bills>

### Senate Bill 384

Senators Jack Sandlin, Chris Garten, and James Tomes Requires the commission for higher education (CHE) and the Indiana department of veterans' affairs to develop and implement the higher education purple star designation for the following purposes: (1) To recognize postsecondary educational institutions that are supportive and inclusive of veterans and military connected families. (2) To provide veterans and military connected families with enhanced support for pursuing and finishing a degree or postsecondary credential. Provides that the application for a designation must be made available to interested postsecondary educational institutions on the website of the CHE before May 1, 2024.

Signed by the Governor: 04-20-2023

### House Bill 1034

Representative Randall Frye

Exempts military pay for members of a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States or the national guard from the individual income tax. (Current law provides an individual income tax exemption for members of a reserve component of the

See States on Page Six...

## OUR OPINION

### Attrition Will Work, if it is Allowed

First introduced in the last General Assembly and reintroduced at the start of this GA, House Bill 69 would require county veterans' service commissions to include at least two members who served in the military after September 11, 2001 and require one member of each commission to be appointed by the board of county commissioners.

Representative Brian Stewart (District 12) was the sole sponsor of the bill last time, but has teamed up with Representative Bernard Willis (District 74) to be cosponsors of this bill.

We have heard that HB 69 was been amended to remove the requirement that one member be appointed by the board of County Commissioner and that only one member must have served after 9-11. If so that is smart on the part of the representatives but as yet we have not seen and actual draft of the amended bill.

OLR can not get behind this bill because it is unnecessary. It will accomplish nothing.

County Veteran Service Commissions are made up of veterans from local Veteran service Organization. They are appointed by the a judge of the

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### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*Ohio Legislative Report* welcomes letters to the editor.

- Letters are limited to 200 words.
- Letters with over 200 words may be edited.
- Letters will be subject to editing for accuracy, clarity, length, and taste.
- Letters must include writer's name, address, and phone number for the purpose of verification.

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## Reflections

*"The bedrock of our democracy is the rule of law and that means we have to have an independent judiciary, judges who can make decisions independent of the political winds that are blowing."*

*-Caroline Kennedy*

# Legislation In The 135<sup>th</sup> Ohio General Assembly

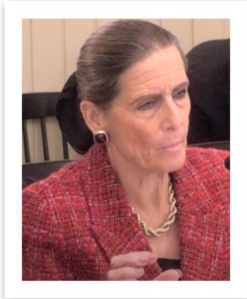
Pertaining to Ohio Veterans, Active Duty, Reserve & National Guard, and Their Families

- ◇ HB 18 Allow military license plate applicant present county veterans ID
- ◇ HB 33 Establishes operating appropriations for fiscal years 2024-2025
- ◇ HB53 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 231 Establish 9-8-8 suicide prevention, mental health telephone line
- ◇ 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
- ◇ 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
- ◇ HCR 8 To urge the federal government to select Ohio for the permanent headquarters of the United States 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 152 Designate Cpl. Jack O. McClure Memorial Highway

See *Bills* on Page Six...

## Happenings, from Page One

August and it was referred to the House Transportation Committee in September. Representative **Adam Holmes** (District 97) introduced House Bill 269 in September and referred to the Transportation Committee the same month. Both bills would name a section of Ohio's



Rep. Schmidt testifies on HB 268

highway in memory of an Ohio Serviceman who was killed in action. Hearings were held on both bills on October 25th and on October 30th they were favorably reported out of committee.

Another bill that would honor a veteran by naming a portion of highway in his memory is House Bill 268. It was introduced by Representative **Jean Schmidt** (District 62) in September and referred to the House

Transportation Committee. The first hearing was held for it on October 31st.

## OHIO CONSTITUTION

### ARTICLE I, BILL OF RIGHTS

#### SECTION #7 RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE; EDUCATION; THE NECESSITY OF RELIGION AND KNOWLEDGE

Effective: 1851

All men have a natural and inalienable right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own conscience. No person shall be compelled to attend, erect, or support any place of worship, or maintain any form of worship, against his consent; and no preference shall be given, by law, to any religious society; nor shall any interference with the rights of conscience be permitted. No religious test shall be required, as a qualification for office, nor shall any person be incompetent to be a witness on account of his religious belief; but nothing herein shall be construed to dispense with oaths and affirmations. Religion, morality, and knowledge, however, being essential to good government, it shall be the duty of the general assembly to pass suitable laws to protect every religious denomination in the peaceable enjoyment of its own mode of public worship, and to encourage schools and the means of instruction.

## Opinion, from Page Four

court of common pleas from the recommendations of the VSOs. The term of office of the five commissioners is five years meaning each year a new commissioner is appointed.

Rep. Stewart pointed out in his testimony before the House Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Committee back in March that "just 12% of the Veteran Service Commission slots statewide are filled by a post-9/11 veteran." Rep. Willis agreed and stated that it was "quite simply is not acceptable."

According to an article *The Center Square* published in August of last year, Ohio's Post 9-11 veteran population is 111,617. That is 16.4% of all Ohio veterans.

Many –if not most of those veterans are under the age of 40 and have jobs and families taking up much of their daily lives. They are not ready or willing to 'get involved' in extra activities.

If the VSOs do not have active, involved Post 9-11 members, they do not have Post 9-11 veterans to recommend to the judge. It is simply a case of supply and demand. The supply is not there so VSOs recommend members who are older, no longer have the job or family duties, and are willing to serve.

Solving this problem by changing the system is not the answer. The natural process of attrition will solve it. As each year goes by, more post 9-11 veterans will be able and willing to step forward and fill the positions on the County Veteran Service Commission Boards. At the same time less and less pre 9-11 veterans will be available.

The O. L. Report feels this bill is unwarranted.

## States, from Page Four

armed forces of the United States or the national guard for the period the member is mobilized and deployed.) Exempts military pay earned by members of an active component of the armed forces of the United States from the individual income tax. (Current law exempts from the individual income tax the military pay earned by members of the National Guard and reserve components of the armed forces of the United States while serving on active duty.)

Signed by the Governor: 05-01-2023