

3rd House District
Wood County



Columbus Office
Vern Riffe Center
77 South High Street, 13th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111

614.466.8104
Rep03@ohiohouse.gov

HARAZ N. GHANBARI
State Representative | Ohio House District 3

Committees

Finance
Energy and Natural Resources
Armed Services and Veterans Affairs
Higher Education
Insurance

Subcommittees

Finance Subcommittee on Primary
and Secondary Education
Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Energy Generation

December 12, 2020

The Honorable Robert P. Mack
Perrysburg Township Trustee
26609 Lime City Road
Perrysburg, OH 43551

Dear Trustee Mack:

Thank you for your letter dated November 23, 2020, regarding concerns with noise created by traffic on the Ohio Turnpike in Wood County.

I contacted Ferzan M. Ahmed, P.E., Executive Director of the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission, regarding procedures for acquisition and installation of noise mitigation barriers. As you are aware, the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission is a separate and independent entity; however, the Ohio Legislature does work closely with and offer recommendations to the Commission to address the needs of the motoring public and communities impacted by the Turnpike.

It is important to note that the Ohio Turnpike is operated solely on toll and concession revenue. The Ohio Turnpike is not classified as a "Federal Aid Highway" and, therefore, is not eligible to receive any form of Federal Highway funds requiring noise compliance. In accordance with the Commission's Master Trust Agreement with its bondholders, there is a hierarchy of how toll and Concession revenue must be utilized; (1) operations, (2) debt service, and (3) capital expenses for maintenance and improvement of the road and facilities.

Presently, the Commission does not construct or fund noise mitigation on Ohio Turnpike right of ways (ROW). However, in a previous state transportation budget bill the Ohio Legislature created the Turnpike Mitigation Program (TMP) to minimize the impact to communities that are adversely affected by the presence of the Ohio Turnpike. The TMP was administered and funded by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). Project types that were eligible for consideration include bridge preservation, minor resurfacing, noise barriers, drainage improvements or other improvements required for public transportation.

During this program, ODOT selected and constructed several noise mitigation projects on the Ohio Turnpike ROW. These projects were funded by ODOT and contributions from local governments. Currently, no additional funds have been made available for the TMP and no applications are currently being accepted by ODOT.

In discussing this issue with Executive Director Ahmed, besides the availability of funds, he cited other considerations when evaluating the feasibility and merit of constructing noise mitigation structures. Primarily, like any public project there is a cost vs. benefit analysis that must be considered; the cost of the project must be weighed against the level of potential mitigation and the number of benefitted receptors. With the specific area in question, a major factor affecting the cost of installing a noise mitigation structure would be the buildability of the area given the topography involved. It is also worthwhile to consider when the property was developed and what significant changes have been made to the Turnpike since the development of the

property. Therefore, even if funding were to become available, a comprehensive study would still need to be completed prior to committing to any project.

I will continue to monitor the situation, and will advocate for solutions to mitigate the noise created through the stretch of Ohio Turnpike mentioned in your correspondence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Haraz N. Ghanbari". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "H" and "G".

Haraz N. Ghanbari

Member of the Ohio House of Representatives

Copy to: Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission