



News from the Ohio Turnpike

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For Immediate Release:

Ohio Turnpike commemorates 60th anniversary at original site

Local elected and Turnpike officials marked the official opening of the Turnpike at Exit-2/Westgate

BEREA (Sept. 30, 2015) – The Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission today paid tribute to the official opening of the Ohio Turnpike, which occurred on Oct. 1, 1955. At 12:01 a.m., Gov. Frank J. Lausche declared, “Remove all barricades. Open the gates and let the traffic flow!”

Turnpike Chairman Jerry N. Hruby recalled the difficulty that engineers and construction crews faced while working long ago in Williams and Fulton Counties. “They faced several obstacles of what was originally the Black Swamp,” said Hruby. “They had to dig through more than 70 feet of spongy soil, the remains of peat bogs, in order to finally reach a firm base. We salute their determination to get the job done.”

Executive Director Randy Cole contrasted the Turnpike of the past, with the Turnpike of today and looked ahead to the future. “The Ohio Turnpike is a bold and successful enterprise with a significant economic impact on northern Ohio communities.”

The Ohio Turnpike is responsible for generating more than \$500 million in northern Ohio economic activity each year. In addition to its 950 employees, there are approximately 3,000 more workers employed in jobs that are affiliated with 14 Service Plazas, which also generate significant local sales taxes.

The Turnpike also adds value, according the Commission, by providing thousands of construction jobs supported through its Capital Program and through future toll revenues. In fact, up to \$125 million will be invested in the Turnpike’s own infrastructure by the close of the 2015 season.

In addition, by leveraging future toll revenues as part of Gov. John Kasich’s Ohio Jobs and Transportation Plan, the Commission is providing more than \$1 billion in new infrastructure projects in northern Ohio. The Bryan High School Marching Band and the A Capella Choir performed at the event. The Golden Bears also performed at the opening of the Ohio Turnpike on Oct. 1, 1955.

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