



Senator Mark Wagoner
2nd District Ohio Senate

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**STATUARY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE:
THOMAS EDISON FOR STATUARY HALL**

Columbus – Though acknowledging it was a difficult decision, by unanimous vote, the members of the Ohio National Statuary Collection Study Committee, voted today to recommend the people's choice – Thomas Edison – to be Ohio's representative in Statuary Hall of the United States Capitol.

"The reality is that any one of the distinguished Ohioans up for consideration by this Committee was worthy of a statue," Wagoner said. "That's why I think that the democratic public vote process was such a good exercise. I am not aware of any other state that asked the residents of their state to play such a major role in the process."

Thomas Edison, the prolific inventor from Milan, Ohio, earned 14,833 votes of the more than 48,700 people who cast ballots over the course of 85 days this summer.

"Not only was he the people's choice, but his Ohio-grown ingenuity, intelligence and entrepreneurial spirit are worthy traits that I think our state would want to present to all who walk through Statuary Hall in the future," Wagoner said.

Wagoner noted that as a result of the committee's recommendation, he will draft legislation to present to the full General Assembly, a vote which is needed for Ohio to officially designate Edison as the state's choice. When it's official, the Ohio Statuary Hall Commission will begin its work to raise the necessary private funds to hire an artist for the project. Wagoner hopes to introduce the bill in coming weeks.

Wagoner thanked the fellow members of the Committee; the Ohio Historical Society, Cincinnati Museum Center, Western Reserve Historical Society and Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board for conducting an organized and engaging public vote process; Paul LaRue and his Washington Court House students for developing lesson plans to drum up student participation, all of the advocates who generously donated their time and knowledge to help all Ohioans learn more about the people who shaped Ohio, and especially the nearly 50,000 people who took the time to vote.

The National Statuary Collection Study Committee was created as part of Senate Bill 277 of the 126th General Assembly to select a replacement statue to be displayed at the United States Capitol as part of the National Statuary Hall Collection. The Committee is comprised of Chairman, Senator Wagoner, Vice Chairman, Representative Tom Letson (D-Warren), Senator Teresa Fedor (D-Toledo), Representative Richard Adams (R-Troy), Senator Karen Gillmor (R-Tiffin) and Representative Connie Pillich (D-Montgomery).