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Shumaker Attorneys Instrumental in Changing Ohio Representation at National Statuary Hall

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WASHINGTON — A statue of Thomas Alva Edison, inventor of the electric light bulb and phonograph, now stands in the U.S. Capitol's National Statuary Hall as a representative of Ohio, thanks to the efforts of several organizations, elected officials and citizens, including attorneys Mark Wagoner and Brian N. McMahon from the full-service business law firm Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP.

For the past five years, Shumaker's Wagoner and McMahon have been working to replace the statue of former Ohio Gov. William Allen, a vocal critic of former President Abraham Lincoln and an opponent of the Emancipation Proclamation, at National Statuary Hall. Wagoner served on a committee and a commission dedicated to making the new statue a reality, and McMahon was instrumental in handling the various legal issues associated with the project, including intellectual property rights and negotiation of the artist agreement.

A Congressional ceremony commemorating the dedication of the Edison statue was held Wednesday, Sept. 21, and included remarks from Wagoner, U.S. House of Representatives Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Paul Ryan.

Wagoner served as a member of the Ohio House of Representatives from 2004-07 and the Ohio Senate from 2007-12. Edison was born in Milan, Ohio, which is in Wagoner's former Senate district.

While in the Ohio Senate, Wagoner was chairman of the Ohio National Statuary Collection Committee, a committee created to help select an accomplished Ohioan who could replace the statue of former Gov. Allen.

"We chose to engage Ohioans in the selection process, so we went out and solicited nominations," Wagoner said.

After the committee received 90 nominees, members held hearings across the state to learn more about the nominees and then narrowed down the options to the top 10. A state-wide vote was held among the 10 finalists, with Ohio residents voting for their representative of choice at historical sites throughout the state. Edison won a plurality of votes, and his selection was approved by the Ohio House, Senate and Gov. John Kasich.

“Edison represents Ohio’s ability to change the world through invention,” Wagoner said. “It’s important to have representatives that remind the world how we can reinvent ourselves.”

Wagoner also served on the Ohio National Statuary Commission, which was formed to raise funds to pay for the Edison sculpture and select a sculptor for the project. The Commission selected sculptor Alan Cottrill of Zanesville, Ohio.

The dedication of the Edison statue at the U.S. Capitol marks the first time a statue representing Ohio at National Statuary Hall has been changed in 150 years.

About Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP

Founded in 1925, Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP is a full-service law firm with more than 245 lawyers and five offices in Toledo and Columbus, Ohio; Tampa and Sarasota, Fla.; and Charlotte, N.C. Shumaker is a premier provider of quality legal services. Whether it's commitment to clients or work in the community, involvement lies at the core of all of Shumaker’s initiatives.

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