

Patrick Manley

Outline Draft  
Tuesday May 30, 2017

Education and Career Readiness Committee  
Sponsor Testimony, HB 176

**COMMITTEE:** Education and Career Readiness

**CHAIRPERSON:** Andrew Brenner

**DATE:** Wednesday May 31, 2017

**TIME:** 1:00 PM

**ROOM:** 121

**NOTATION:** Proponent Testimony BILL H.B. No. 176

SPONSOR

Rep. Andy Thompson

**AGENDA**

TITLE STATUS

Address school assessments and curricula and teacher evaluations - 2<sup>nd</sup> Hearing Proponent

**-START TESTIMONY-**

Good afternoon. Thank you Representative Brenner and the members of this committee for allowing me to speak to you today.

(Background)

My name is Patrick Manley. I am a Columbus resident, a licensed architect, business owner and an adjunct college instructor. I founded my architectural practice in 1985 and have expanded into construction management and real estate. I sit on the board of directors of Dave Fox Design/Build, having served as chairperson for seven years. Dave Fox one of the leading custom home design/build companies in the nation and is ranked in the top 30 nationally with over \$11,000.000 million dollars in revenue this year. I am the former President of the state chapter of the Association of Licensed Architects and also sat on the national board of directors, in charge of Ohio continuing education.

I am a married father of two sons, one well into his high tech computer career with a Bachelor of Science in Network Engineering. My youngest last month graduated from Ohio State University in Pharmaceutical Sciences and will be applying to medical school in the fall.

My wife, Linda is a Family Nurse practitioner specializing in pediatric and general emergency medicine. She has two degrees from Ohio State University, is an author and lecturer. All four of us

received our K-12 educations in four different parochial schools. My brother and his wife are public school teachers in Springfield.

There are many speakers this week, so I will limit my remarks to three issues and keep my time in front of you as short as possible.

Please keep in mind that I do not consider myself an education expert. However, I am a professional education consumer and job creator for others who

I represent myself, but belong to three local Chambers of Commerce and talk to many small business owners who feel exactly the way I do about the state of public education. I do not represent them, but I am representative of most small business owners throughout the state, of this I am sure. I also talked

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I wish to address three issues pertaining to House Bill 176. The first is the need to eliminate Common Core in favor of proven classical education methods. The second is the need to hand off management of education and schools to individual school districts. The third issue is the related to the second in that both teachers and students should not be evaluated according to state of national standards, but according to the professional judgment of administrators within a given school.

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(Eliminating Common Core)

The design, engineering and construction of buildings, highways and bridges depends almost entirely on creative problem-solving backed by precise, reproducible mathematics and science.

Why this is so is that every construction project involves an endless series of problems and obstacles that must be resolved in order for the work to proceed toward completion. Part of the reason for this is that every structure is unique, and has never been built before. This is true of the most mundane structures to the most elaborate because each building site has special requirements under the building and zoning codes and unique conditions from weather, orientation and fire resistance.

Unlike manufacturing, construction is not a linear process. The program, or what I might call the curriculum since we are talking about education, the schedule, budget and workflow is always difficult to predict and even more difficult to manage. The objective is to standardize routine and repetitive tasks, while creating the widest possible berth to allow for unknown problems to be solved through individual professional judgment.

Manufacturing, on the other hand, relies more heavily on linear and rigid steps, but even then, problems arise and only real live people trained to make decisions can solve them. Both industries benefit from decisions made by the people who do the work.

Common Core is based upon standards, and therefore by its nature, follows rigid and very linear steps. Much of it is designed around the idea that the nation's education system must be standardized in order to compare students with one another. I ask why? Why do I care how my child performs against a student in Nebraska, or Iowa? The most frequent answer I hear is that we are in a global economy and we need to compete on a global scale. No we don't. Maybe 4% of the businesses in this country have a national or global presence, which means that 96% compete within their home town or county. Common Core is based on a false premise as is all top down federal educational programs. Can anyone in this room name a single federal education program since 1965 that has resulted in better educated

children across the nation? We know the answer. The problem is not that we simply have not found the right program. The problem is that it is impossible for a federal program to succeed because the needs of students vary so dramatically from state to state, county to county, school district to school district, school building to school building, and often desk to desk. A top down program, whether it be federal or state, is doomed to fail under any circumstances. This is a universal truth backed up with 52 years of failures and tens of billions of dollars spent without success. When this country operated its schools from the local level, with professional teachers and administrators in charge, our state lead the nation in many fields. The argument that colleges need to see consistent curricula and testing in order to evaluate applicants is nonsense. For two hundred years prior to Common Core and other national testing, colleges and universities had no problem evaluating prospective students. In fact, several prominent colleges recently eliminated the SAT and ACT scores as a prerequisite for application. Many others relegated standardized test scores to a minor role in determining who gets accepted.

Classical education and traditional hands-on school management proved itself long ago, which brings me to my second point.

#### (School Management)

The second point I would like to bring your attention to is the failure of school management, commonly referred to as school control. Local control is a hotly debated topic. Opponents often claim they are for local control while demanding strict adherence to federal and state rules that take away control from local school boards, administrators, teachers and parents. Ohio has some of the best educated and most experienced teachers and administrators in the country, yet are all too often not permitted to use professional judgment. They are forced to abide by ridiculous and damaging rules such as “zero tolerance policies”, for example, in place of professional judgment and common sense. Control through state and national bureaucratic policies is the equivalent of placing a pan on the stove then walking away. Sooner or later the house will burn down because no one is watching and no one is held accountable.

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#### (Teacher and Student Evaluations)

Ties to local control are teacher evaluations. House Bill 176 eliminates the state and federally adopted teacher and principal evaluations, OTES, RESA, and OPES. From a businessman's perspective, employee evaluations beyond those of one's direct supervisor are not only laughable, but are meaningless. The only true and accurate way to evaluate an employee is through direct observation and daily contact with that person over an extended period of time. This can only come from school administrators, period.

The same goes for graduation requirements. If a student passes his or her courses in the judgment of the teachers, then that student should graduate. Why should a graduation test be required when the student has already proved competency in each class for four years? Its redundant and like all of the standardized tests, a waste of time for teachers and students, and a waste of money for Ohio.

A few side notes:

Business Support

Contrary to recent ads, there is no evidence that Common Core is widely supported by the business community. Did you ever notice that its almost only the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and its mini-me, the Ohio Chamber that we ever hear about? Did you know that it is estimated that less than 5% of businesses in Ohio belong to these two groups? Are you aware that Pearson, the largest and most profitable Common Core vendor is one of the most influential companies in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce? This is not secret.

#### Teacher Support

A recent survey showed that 73% of teachers are enthusiastic about Common Core. I have talked with 356 teachers in fourteen school districts since February. 352 told me they opposed Common Core. One thought it was ok, but confided that she is a teaching tutor and will not be involved with it. One was not sure how she felt about it. Two supported Common Core, but neither one actually taught it. My informal survey is not scientific, but what are the odds of the first 356 teachers I run into having 352 opposed to Common Core? Well, it turns out that Pearson, the company with the most Common Core related contracts, produced the survey. I don't want to say the fabricated it. Maybe they simply used Common Core math to tally the results. I don't know.

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In summary, I cannot stress enough that if we do not repeal Common Core, eliminate testing, and if we do not substitute the education and experience of teachers for arbitrary standards, then in as little as ten years, Ohio businesses will no longer prefer to hire students who were educated in Ohio. I already see the impact of Common Core in my first year college students who cannot write a coherent sentence, think that Google is a bibliography and cannot do basic math without a calculator.

Let me repeat, Ohio businesses will aggressively recruit students from states that have eliminated Common Core and in particular, will offer the best jobs to graduates who not only avoided Common Core but were educated outside of the standards-based curriculum. In other words, some home school students, private school graduates and foreign students will be perceived as better prepared for entry level positions.

I am not one to predict the future, but in this case, the end game is quite obvious.

Thank you.

Patrick W. Manley, RA, ALA

**-END TESTIMONY-**