

December 12, 2017

Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Ryan and Ranking Member Cera and members of the Ohio House Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education Bill 102.

My name is Ron Adler and I am the President of the Ohio Coalition for Quality Education. OCQE is the statewide leadership organization for Ohio's 376 public charter schools. We also support a range of choices in education to provide all children with quality education opportunities. This is why we support Representative Brenner's House Bill 102.

While much of HB 102 deals with school funding, today I would like to focus on a portion of this bill that will significantly improve our school transportation system.

It's been 50 years since the Ohio Legislature passed the Fair Bus Bill. Since then, with more than 600 school districts, 376 community schools and hundreds of private schools, transporting students efficiently and safely has become more and more difficult.

Over the years, there has been a growing divide between the 'public only' transportation advocates and those supporting transportation of all students. That would include public school students in charter schools, public school students in traditional schools and students of tax-paying parents who attend private schools.

Our Ohio Constitution, in article 6 section 2 specifically calls for a system of "thorough and efficient common schools"¹ and the definition of "common" means "belonging equally to more than one; belonging to the public; serving for the use of all"².

House Bill 102 would eliminate these turf wars and puts the needs and the rights of students first. It eliminates the more than 600 'football fields' of yellow schools buses throughout the state which are increasingly costly to maintain and replaces them with common sense, countywide transportation districts administrated by our 52 Educational Service Centers.

This has the potential to create a system that would correct many of today's transportation problems. Ohio students and their parents deserve that.

On behalf of OCQE and our Parents for Charters Schools organization I am asking you to support HB 102.

Thank you very much for your time today. I am happy to answer any questions.

¹<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/Assets/Laws/Constitution.pdf>

²<http://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/common>