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Chairman Duffey, Vice-Chair Antani, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 58.

HB 58 will require manuscript and cursive handwriting to be part of Ohio's K-5 curriculum.

- Manuscript writing, for those unaware or confused, is the teaching of individually written letters without picking up your pen or pencil.
- Cursive, therefore, is the connecting of the individual letters in manuscript writing to form words.

An unfortunate byproduct of "teaching to the test" is that foundational skills such as cursive handwriting have been slowly removed from our school's curriculum. There is a host of academic literature and research that demonstrates that handwriting is closely tied to literacy, fine motor skills, and other cognitive development. Cursive handwriting has been shown to help those with dyslexia recognize words and form sentences.

Cursive writing is not required by Common Core – or as we now have, Ohio Standards. As educators strive to respond to the explicit requirements of the CCSS, Ohio Standards, and other national standards, the resulting "teach to the test" approach has reduced the number of schools requiring cursive handwriting.

Twelve states have already moved to make cursive handwriting mandatory for their state's curriculum. Those states are; Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Ohio's own State Board of Education has passed a resolution favoring adding cursive to our state curriculum.

Cursive writing is NOT an outdated form of communication. We are not advocating for cursive writing to take the place of printing, texting, and keyboarding. Those are equally important skills and should be taught in the classroom along with cursive. We are not asking teachers to carve out more time in their

already packed class schedules. We only ask that they incorporate cursive learning as part of their reading, writing, and spelling courses.

Members of the committee, I thank you for allowing me to testify before committee today on this bill. I now turn over testimony to my lovely joint sponsor, Representative Slaby, and if it pleases the committee, we would be happy to answer questions afterward.