



**Ohio Conference of the American Association of University Professors**

222 East Town Street, 2W, Columbus, OH 43215

Testimony of Stephen Mockabee, Ph.D.

Ohio Conference of the American Association of University Professors

House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee

Representative Mike Duffey, Chair

October 11, 2017

Chairman Duffey, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee:

My name is Steve Mockabee, and I am here in my capacity as government relations committee chair for the Ohio Conference of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). We represent approximately 6,000 college and university faculty at both public and private, as well as two- and four-year, institutions of higher education in the state. I am an Associate Professor and Graduate Program Director in the Department of Political Science at the University of Cincinnati.

I would like to start by commending House leadership on the establishment of this new committee. Given the great importance of higher education and the challenges we face, we believe that this committee is necessary to further explore complex issues and to give stakeholders like us a greater opportunity to engage with all of you. We want to be partners in finding solutions that address the real problems we face in higher education while maintaining educational quality.

I am here today to express my association's opposition to Substitute House Bill 66.

We appreciate that Representative Young was open to amending the original version of the bill to instead focus on studying these issues. We also appreciate that Rep. Young and members of this committee see the value in tenured faculty teaching our undergraduate students. We agree that, too often, undergraduate courses are taught by adjunct, rather than full-time, faculty. But this is not a function of tenured faculty not teaching enough or contributing in other meaningful ways to the university or undergraduate mission; rather, this is a function of institutions not having enough full-time and tenured faculty.

Ohio taxpayers and students should expect that they are paying for quality education by full-time faculty. However, according to data from the Integrated Post-Secondary Educational Data System (IPEDS), less than 24% of Ohio university budgets are spent employing faculty. Surely, we ought to focus more on seeing that percentage rise rather than attempting to micromanage the faculty who represent that 24%.

The chart on the following page illustrates how many adjuncts (or part-time) faculty teach at our institutions and what percentage of the total faculty they comprise. Additionally, it shows in percentage terms how little it would take for institutions to convert adjunct positions to full-time ones.

<b>Costs of Converting Part-Time Faculty to Full-Time Positions</b>				
<b>Institution</b>	<b>Part-Time Faculty</b>	<b>% of Faculty in Part-Time Positions</b>	<b>Cost of Converting 50% of Part-Time Faculty to Asst. Professorships as a % of Total Expenditures</b>	<b>Cost of Converting 50% of Part-Time Faculty to Instructorships as a % of Total Expenditures</b>
Bowling Green	433	34.95%	4.51%	3.68%
Central State	89	46.35%	5.31%	4.00%
Cleveland State	608	51.88%	9.58%	8.99%
Kent State	1337	48.06%	7.54%	6.04%
Miami University	477	30.29%	3.94%	2.22%
Ohio State	1813	42.02%	1.55%	2.13%
Ohio University	869	43.47%	4.90%	4.47%
Shawnee State	161	51.94%	9.54%	7.10%
Akron	936	51.68%	8.73%	7.52%
Cincinnati	1250	43.97%	4.55%	3.25%
Toledo	317	26.48%	1.79%	1.34%
Wright State	165	17.76%	1.91%	1.23%
Youngstown State	565	56.27%	11.10%	8.50%

The second column in from the right shows the percentages of universities' budgets that it would require to convert 50% of adjunct positions to full-time, tenure-track assistant professorships. The column on the far right shows another option: the percentages of universities' budgets that it would require to convert 50% of adjunct positions to full-time, non-tenure track instructorship positions. These figures include the institutions' branch campuses. We used a 50% conversion rate, as an institution only would need to convert about that many positions in order to fulfill current teaching requirements. It is common for an adjunct to teach one to two courses per term at one institution, while full-time faculty typically teach three to four classes per term.

In percentage terms, these conversion rates do not seem unreasonable, but one may say that they translate to hefty dollar amounts. Certainly, universities' budgets are huge, and even just one to two percent would not be easy for institutions to shift immediately. However, conversion does not have to occur overnight. It would require a commitment from institutions and the state to develop multi-year plans to phase in more full-time positions. Institutions would have to prioritize the instructional mission and the state would have to increase state support. As state support has declined and tuition has been restrained, so has the number of full-time and tenured faculty.

At some point, the realization must be made that we get what we pay for. Our institutions of higher education have been holding the line with tuition and fee freezes, and without sufficient financial support from the state to make up for inflationary increases alone. But that obviously cannot continue forever. We hope to see continued efficiencies in non-instructional areas by our institutions, as well as increased support from the state. Then we might be able to get to a place

where we have sufficient full-time and tenured faculty to meet the various needs of our great public colleges and universities.

We respectfully request that this committee amend the bill so that the proposed study committee's mission includes a review of the breakdown of faculty at each institution (e.g. full-time tenure-track, full-time non-tenure-track, and part-time) and recommendations for increasing the number of full-time tenure-track faculty.

We also ask that in addition to the two faculty appointees that are to be made by the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate, that the chair and vice chair (or their designees) of the Ohio Faculty Council – which represents university faculty – be invited to participate.

Moreover, we ask the committee to reconsider the language calling for an external entity to review and rank each university with respect to contribution to the undergraduate mission. We question the rationale and purpose of such a ranking. This committee should carefully consider the value of expending resources in this way.

Additionally, we take issue with the language that asks the committee to recommend how each state university could incorporate contribution to the undergraduate mission into its existing post-tenure review process. This incorrectly assumes that universities currently do not incorporate contribution to the undergraduate mission into their tenure review processes. Teaching is one of the three pillars of faculty evaluation, along with research and service. For many faculty, especially those teaching at regional branch campuses, or at institutions that do not offer graduate programs, undergraduate teaching forms the primary basis for tenure and promotion. We request for that language to be removed.

Furthermore, we note that there are to be chief academic officers from two universities on the committee, but otherwise no guidelines insuring that the committee is a broad cross-section representing Ohio's diverse institutions. The committee would look quite different if the representatives are from two large research institutions versus smaller undergraduate-centered campuses. We recommend keeping that in mind as the committee members are chosen.

Finally, a few words on tenure. Tenure is a mechanism for protecting academic freedom, which is the core principle of the AAUP. Academic freedom is the ability to teach and conduct research without fear of interference, censorship, or retaliation. It preserves the intellectual integrity of our educational system and thus serves the public good. By having tenure, and thus protecting academic freedom, faculty are able to engage in those sometimes uncomfortable classroom discussions that are key to developing students' critical thinking skills – the skills all employers seek. Faculty also are able to pursue lines of research that may be controversial, but are necessary to the educational pursuit and innovation. Ohio should be cautious in its treatment of tenure. Attacking or micromanaging tenure will hinder our institutions' ability to attract and retain quality faculty.

In sum, my organization cannot support Substitute HB 66 in its current form, but would not oppose the bill if the aforementioned amendments are adopted. Thank you for your time. I welcome any questions you may have.