

Testimony before the House Ways and Means Committee
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Thank you, Chairman Schaffer and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, for allowing AICUO to submit written testimony on behalf of Ohio's independent, nonprofit colleges and universities in support of House Bill (HB) 337.

AICUO represents 51 nonprofit institutions of higher education in our state. Our members educate 134,000 students, and award one third of the baccalaureate degrees in Ohio each year, and even higher shares of our state's degrees in mathematics, natural and biological sciences, and other key areas of study.

HB 337, introduced by Representative Duffey, eliminates sales tax on the purchase of textbooks. As stated in previous testimony, 27 states have already exempted textbook from sales tax. By continuing the sales tax Ohio college students are put at a disadvantage to their peers in other states. The existing law pushes savvy students to look for more affordable options, like buying textbooks online where they may not have to pay sales tax.

The legislative language creates safeguards to ensure no one can abuse the program. By requiring active student identification as well as a copy of the formal coursework materials list, HB 337 certifies the sales-tax exemption is being used for its intended purpose.

While our schools do everything they can financially to assist those student in need, AICUO applauds Representative Duffey's efforts to assist students that much more.