

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Scherer, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for providing me the opportunity to address the issue of textbook affordability. My name is Liz Webb and I am a freshman at The Ohio State University and a member of OSU's Undergraduate Student Government.

Even though I have only been a college student for one semester, I still have experienced great stress when ordering textbooks and access codes with astronomical prices. My family and I paid \$400 for textbooks this fall, and we anticipate that this trend of spending nearly \$500 every semester will continue until I graduate in 2021. The textbooks I both purchased and rented generally proved beneficial to advancing my learning this semester, but at the beginning of every semester my fellow students and I have to ask, "is this textbook—and ultimately my academic success—truly worth hundreds of dollars?" I am grateful to say that my family proudly supports my higher education endeavors and assists with purchasing textbooks and other supplies, but this is not true for all Ohio students.

The Ohio State University's Office of Student Financial Aid estimates that an OSU student spends upwards of \$1,168 for books and supplies each academic year, and using the state of Ohio's 5.75% sales tax, students could be paying roughly \$30 per year \$500 spent on textbooks. College students cannot truly function without textbooks, but the current prices of books force many students to consider not purchasing required texts and they risk hindering their academic success. This tax exemption will lessen the burden for the hundreds of thousands of students from various socioeconomic backgrounds attending college in Ohio. Higher education is necessary in the 21st century, and as more students choose to pursue higher education, it is vital that we take all possible measures to keep the cost of education low while not diminishing the quality of education. Many universities are working to increase the use of affordable open-

sourced textbooks, including The Ohio State University and OSU's Undergraduate Student Government, but students across the state are depending on our legislators to take concrete action to lessen the financial burden of higher education.

Any action taken to reduce the price of textbooks proves beneficial for all Ohio students and this tax exemption will only make quality higher education more accessible for all. As a student who is deeply concerned with the cost of textbooks as I further my educational pursuits, I urge you vote in favor of HB 337 in order to increase textbook affordability for all students and ultimately increase higher education access for all Ohio students.