

Testimony on House Bill 337

Ohio House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee
Representative Tim Schaffer, Chair

Dr. Dan E. Krane,
Chair, Ohio Faculty Council

Chair Schaffer, Vice Chair Sherer, Ranking Member Rogers, and Committee members, my name is Dan Krane and I am a professor of Biological Sciences (with an affiliate appointment in Computer Science) at Wright State University. I also have the honor of serving as the Chair of the Ohio Faculty Council which represents the faculty at all of the four-year public universities in the State of Ohio. Thank you for allowing me to appear before you today to give a faculty perspective on House Bill 337.

I would like to start by reminding your committee that the Ohio Faculty Council represents the faculty at all of the four-year public institutions of higher education in Ohio. The Ohio Faculty Council is deeply committed to supporting and bringing attention to the critical role that Ohio's institutions of higher education play in revitalizing the economy of the State and the nation by attracting and training an educated workforce. We seek out opportunities to make a high quality education affordable and accessible to all Ohioans.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to give a faculty perspective on the proposal to exempt textbook sales from Ohio's sales tax.

In October of this year the OFC unanimously adopted a resolution (<https://www.ohiofacultycouncil.org/sites/ohiofacultycouncil.wright.edu/files/page/attachments/TextbookAffordabilityResolutionOFC.pdf>) that outlines a set of four synergistic initiatives that, when fully implemented have been conservatively estimated to result in annual savings of \$300 million in textbook costs to students in the two- and four-year public institutions of higher education in Ohio. One of those four initiatives specifically calls for the adoption of legislation such as the 132nd Ohio General Assembly's HB 337 that would exempt post-secondary textbooks from state sales tax.

- Textbook cost increases have out-paced inflation. Textbook costs have increased by more than four times the rate of inflation (significantly more than the increase in the cost of medical care or new homes) since 2006 and by 945% since 1978.
- Textbook costs have a significant impact on higher education costs. The U.S. Public Interest Research Group has found that nationwide textbook costs are