



**House Finance Committee
SB 4 Proponent Testimony
Ohio School Boards Association
Buckeye Association of School Administrators
Ohio Association of School Business Officials
April 30, 2019**

Chairman Blessing, Vice Chairman Jones, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the Committee. My name is Thomas Ash, and I am the Director of Governmental Relations for the Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA). Joining me today to provide this testimony and to answer your questions are Barbara Shaner representing the Ohio Association of School Business Officials (OASBO) and Jennifer Hogue, Director of Legislative Services for the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA). Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today to express our support for Senate Bill 4.

If approved, this legislation would make a capital appropriation of \$100 million for school facilities assistance and would allow districts to move forward with several projects that are ready to begin construction.

Ohio should rightly take great pride in its support of new and remodeled learning environments for its students. We believe that, because of the support of previous General Assemblies and administrations, Ohio has become and remains a leader in providing school construction assistance.

Since 1997, the Ohio Construction Facilities Commission has disbursed over \$12.1 billion to supplement local dollars for school construction. As of today, 284 school districts have completed their Master Facilities Plans with 1,202 new and remodeled school buildings now open. Another 116 school districts are either in progress or have had at least one segment completed.

However, the available funds to continue this progress during the current biennium are gone. The appropriation of \$100 million would allow work to continue for those districts that have secured local funding and are awaiting state dollars.

We are aware of eight districts that are ready to proceed. These districts had a combined enrollment of over 33,500 students as of this past spring.

If no action is taken at this time, these districts will have two new challenges. The first will be explaining to their communities how their aspirations for new facilities cannot be realized at this time.

The second involves potentially higher construction costs if those projects are delayed. There simply

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may not be adequate contingency money to cover the higher costs for any unanticipated additional expenses.

Chairman Blessing, thank you for this opportunity to express our support for this version of SB 4, and we will be happy to respond to questions at the pleasure of the chair.