



**State Representative Erica C. Crawley
Ohio House District 26
House Bill 239 Sponsor Testimony (as prepared)**

Chairman Blessing, Vice Chair Jones, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity for Representative Manning and I to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 239, the Testing Reduction Act.

Unlike Representative Manning, I do not have the perspective as a teacher in this space; however, I come from the perspective of a mother of high school-age twin girls who has personally seen the emotional toll that standardized testing takes on our students. Like Rep. Manning said, not only are these tests stressful for students, they also take the fun out of the learning process.

The sheer volume of testing and the collective amount of time it takes creates a burden on both teachers and students, leaving less time for actual classroom instruction. A 2015 study surveying 66 school districts cited by the *Washington Post*¹ found that the average high school student is spending around 23 hours taking roughly 10 tests per year from 9th to 11th grade, and about 16 hours on eight tests in 12th grade- about 86 hours total. Of course, those averages don't take into account the time necessary to prepare students for these tests, time which could have been used more effectively in the classroom. In Ohio, high school students can spend upwards of 90 hours on testing between 9th and 12th grade.

Moreover, I have seen with my daughters that even when other grade levels are testing spending, my children's schedules are still impacted by two or three hour delays. Again, the theme of less time being spent in the classroom emerges, and teachers are forced to account for the time lost to testing in ways that are counterproductive for them and their students.

By eliminating those four end of course exams, our legislation grants our teachers and students more time in the classroom. Our belief is that this will allow teachers to be more creative in their approach to teaching and enable students to enjoy the learning process again. Convening local work groups to examine district-required testing will help each district uniquely identify how it can improve its existing processes and implement reforms in a way that best serves its schools' teachers and students. Finally, the Department of Education's required annual report will help quantify exactly how much time each district is spending on testing, and it will better inform decision-making at the local and state levels.

In developing this legislation, my joint sponsor and I brought many different stakeholders to the table for an interested parties meeting to consult their expertise, incorporate different viewpoints, and, ultimately, to make sure that we got this right.

Those that came forward from various organizations to help us in doing so have our gratitude- they include ODE, Ohio Education Association, the Ohio School Boards Association, the Ohio Federation of Teachers, the Ohio School Counselor Association, the Ohio Association of School Business Officials, and many others. I truly believe that this legislation will make a positive impact on Ohio's teachers and schools.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and at this time Representative Manning and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

¹ https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/study-says-standardized-testing-is-overwhelming-nations-public-schools/2015/10/24/8a22092c-79ae-11e5-a958-d889faf561dc_story.html?utm_term=.1c9586834228