

Chairman Jones, Vice Chair Manchester, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to House Bill 322.

I have been associated with the education profession since 1971. I have a B.A. from the University of Mt. Union, M.Ed. from Kent State University and 15 hours of post graduate course work from Kent and Ashland. I taught all levels of high school English at West Branch Local Schools in Beloit, OH and Education classes at Mt. Union for 2 years. I was a Praxis III assessor until it ended and have worked as a RESA assessor for 4 years. I was very involved with professional development at the local and state levels. I was chairman of my Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC), lead mentor for my school district and LPDC liaison representing 3 counties at the state level with the Ohio Department of Education until my retirement in 2008.

Mentoring and evaluation are key factors in any educational institution. If you ask teachers to name someone who guided them in the early years, without hesitation, most will recall that one person who was always there to help and guide them. The difference is now we have a title for these people—mentors. Programs like Praxis and RESA were designed to instruct, lead, and support incoming educators. These programs have defined best practices and given guidance to those new to education.

The teacher evaluation process has changed too, but the contents of the evaluations have always centered on the following: the teacher's subject area knowledge; the teacher's understanding of the knowledge's importance; the teacher's ability to impart that knowledge; the teacher's attempt to reflect, plan and improve future lessons. Yesterday it was Praxis; today it is RESA. They are different programs but contain the same evaluative content. We evaluate our students to find out what they know. We evaluate teachers for the same reasons.

RESA invites new teachers to constantly question their instruction, its fit with the school district, and how to impart that instruction now and in the future. Teachers can depend on their mentors, administrators, and colleagues to suggest the most effective instructional methods based on their experiences. The process to complete the RESA has been significantly streamlined. It is like a take home essay test based on what teachers do every day in the classroom. The candidate knows the questions ahead of time, has the project details and has a set time to complete it. There are no surprises. The teacher chooses the class to record and the video segment to issue for evaluation. This a fair evaluation. Anonymity is important to keep the bias out of the process. At any time during the evaluation, I may defer because I know the candidate or because I feel unqualified to evaluate the content in the submission.

This training program for RESA assessors is very effective. My job as an evaluator is to watch that teacher, read those answers, and provide feedback on the content mentioned above. Every year we must go through a required training program. I have spent many hours reading anchor answers, watching videos, and reading master evaluations to get my annual certification. The program teaches us that we must look at this candidate as someone who has reached this level of performance, and through continued mentoring and experience, will only be more effective in

the classroom. Our job as evaluators is to give essential feedback to those who exhibit the best practices and instructional feedback to those who fall below the minimum criteria.

RESA is important because it identifies teachers who have met the resident educator requirements and are working their way to their first professional license. It doesn't stop there. The RESA is necessary to ensure that teachers are doing their best and able to productively reflect on their practice. Through reflection, teachers can hone their methods and revise their instruction because every year new challenges arise and new students come into the classroom. Teachers learn new skills and gain valuable experience. Everyone in the district needs to be accountable. All those associated within the school's community, including the administrators, teachers and students, benefit from the Resident Educator Program because it keeps that school district's strong educational foundation for beginning teachers in place and establishes an effective framework for everyone involved.

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