

September 16, 2020

Benjamin J. Williams
College Board, Senior Director, Global Policy & External Relations
Interested Party Testimony
Re: SB 358

Chairman Lehner, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking member Fedor, and members of the Ohio Senate Education Committee.

My name is Benjamin Williams and I am submitting written interested party testimony for SB 358 on behalf of the College Board. The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of over 6,000 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education.

Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT and the Advanced Placement Program. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators and schools.

While we understand the rationale behind waiving some testing requirements, we caution policies that allow for a waiver on the college entrance exams, even during these uncertain times. While the intent of this legislation is meant to serve a greater good, the College Board has concerns with test optional or waiver policies such as the one SB 358 proposes. Waiver policies fail to identify students who could succeed in college and have the most negative impact on students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

Requiring students to take college entrance exams on a school day, promotes equity and has a major impact on the community, opening doors to college, scholarships, and financial aid for every student. Promoting policies, such as requiring every junior to take a college entrance exam (and the state providing appropriations for districts) has profound impacts such as reducing racial, ethnic, and income disparities. Additionally, research has proven that when students take specific steps towards a post-secondary future, each measure taken increases the likelihood students will pursue that future.

Countless research shows that statewide college entrance assessment policies encourage students to attend college who otherwise would have never considered attending. Statewide SAT/ACT testing ensures that our most vulnerable students are not losing out on much needed opportunities.

Sincerely,



Benjamin J. Williams