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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

OHIO SENATE

SENATOR MATT DOLAN, CHAIR
SENATOR DAVID BURKE, VICE CHAIR

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Burke, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the Senate Finance Committee.

As this year's Chair of the Joint Education Oversight Committee ("JEOC"), I am providing this written testimony to support the continued existence and funding of JEOC and to encourage removal the changes in the Senate's substitute version of Am. Sub. HB 166 which would terminate this joint committee.

The Joint Education Oversight Committee (JEOC) is a bipartisan, bicameral research-oriented committee designed to provide research and support to members of the General Assembly when designing new or revised education policy and in exercising the General Assembly's oversight role in this subject area.

This is the second time I have been appointed by the Speaker of the House to Chair this committee. The chairmanship rotates between the House and the Senate yearly. I have found JEOC and its work to be a valuable fact-based, research-oriented resource for the General Assembly.

As you know, primary and secondary education policy is often complex and confusing. JEOC provides valuable assistance to the General Assembly and its members in understanding current and future education policy, policy choices and the consequences of policy choices.

Here, in brief, are some essential reasons to retain the Joint Education Oversight Committee:

1. It is the only entity that works only for the General Assembly and its members on matters of primary and secondary education policy. Sorting through conflicting information from outside sources can be difficult and confusing. It is important that the General Assembly have its own source of information and analysis for both its policy development role and its oversight role.

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2. The JEOC staff is highly trained and experienced in these areas, including testing and statistical analysis, and can assist with fact-based and researched-based information to help legislators arrive at appropriate policies.
3. It costs very little. The relatively modest budget of Joint Committee (its request is for \$376,663 in FY20 and \$378,668 in FY21) provides a significant return in unbiased information and analysis for legislators on education policy issues.
4. It is the only forum, regularly meeting, in which members of both the House and the Senate meet together to hear the same information on education issues, ask questions, and have the opportunity to mutually discuss these matters. Having the same information is a significant benefit when it comes to making bi-cameral decisions.
5. It provides a forum for the House and Senate to take a look at the “big picture” in education policy topics and to better understand the consequences of both current and emerging education issues the legislature must, or may wish, to tackle.

In summary, JEOC is a valuable resource to assist legislators with the important task of ensuring good education policy in Ohio. It is the only entity that works solely for the legislature to provide this **valuable fact-based information**. It’s mission and role is to provide **research-based** policy options and to help explain the various consequences which may flow from the policy options.

I encourage the continued funding and existence of the Joint Committee on Education Oversight.

Thank you Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Burke, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the committee for your consideration.