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20th Ohio House District

Sponsor Testimony – House Education Committee
House Bill 556
May 17, 2016

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Derickson, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the House Education Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 556. I want to provide you some context and background to the history of the "Win-win" agreements at issue in this legislation.

As you are aware, House Bill 556 would allow a school district that is a party to an annexation agreement (or Win-win agreement) to make the boundaries of their school district permanent if the district board passes a resolution.

When the original Win-Win agreement was struck in 1986, any property in the city of Columbus that was already being served by a suburban school district remained under that arrangement. In return, Columbus schools get 1 percent of the tax growth from new construction of commercial and industrial properties in those areas the suburban districts serve. Property annexed to Columbus after the deal was signed enters Columbus City Schools. One complication that has arisen from these agreements is the phenomenon of "Win-Win islands," which are parts of the Columbus district but are scattered around the outlying areas of Franklin County.

Win-win agreements are up for renewal every six years between the Columbus and surrounding suburb school districts. However, these discussions can turn tense, and surrounding suburbs may feel handcuffed in the negotiation process.

Giving a suburban school district the autonomy to control the borders of their district is a common-sense approach to this complex concern. Simply stated, this bill allows suburban school districts to have a necessary tool to use in advocating on behalf of their students.

Again, I wanted to thank the committee for its time and consideration. Both Representative Duffey and I would be happy to entertain any questions that the committee might have.