



Education and Career Readiness Committee
Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Proponent Testimony on House Bill 491

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Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Slaby, Ranking Minority Member Fedor and members of the Ohio House Education and Career Readiness Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HB 491 on behalf of the Ohio ESC Association and our member organizations.

Ohio continues to face a significant shortage of related services personnel in school districts across the state; this is true in both permanent and substitute positions. HB 491 helps to address this critical need by providing more flexibility to properly credentialed individuals who have the professional but not ODE-issued license and would like to serve as short- or long-term substitutes in a school setting.

The bill requires, upon the request and recommendation of the superintendent of a school district or ESC, the governing authority of a community school or STEM school, and the governing body of a college-preparatory boarding school or chartered nonpublic school, the State Board of Education to issue substitute licenses to speech-language pathologists, audiologists, registered nurses, physical therapists or physical therapist assistants, occupational therapist or occupational therapist assistants, and social workers who:

- (1) are licensed in Ohio,
- (2) wish to be employed to work in a substitute capacity by a school district or school, and
- (3) submit to the State Board a copy of the current valid occupational license and all materials required to complete a criminal records check.

To insure quality candidates in permanent positions, the bill provides protections by specifying that a person licensed under the bill may not be employed in a nonsubstitute capacity without satisfying the licensure or permit requirements applicable to the person's prospective position of employment established in rules of the State Board.

Given the critical need for quality substitutes to serve our most vulnerable students, I encourage your positive consideration of HB 491.