

**Testimony of
Shawn McCollough
President and Chief Executive Officer, American Board**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to speak today on HB 628. My name is Shawn McCollough, I am the President and CEO of American Board. I am also a traditionally trained teacher, principal, and three-time superintendent of schools. I originally joined American Board in 2005 as a member of their Board of Directors and my intention was to poke holes in their program. After working with this program for years, and getting it to the quality that I believe is best, I have come to realize that this program is effective and is needed to increase the teacher supply. I assumed the role of American Board President and CEO in 2011.

As a superintendent of schools in Nogales Unified School District, Arizona I knew firsthand the difficulty in finding and retaining quality teachers. During that time, I was approached by a young man with a bachelor's degree in chemistry who wanted to teach in Nogales. Our district was spending so much money trying to recruit teachers to come out to Nogales, and here I had an intelligent and committed young man who was asking to come to our community. But under Arizona law, I could not hire him and had to refer him back to the university system for a traditional teaching credential. As a resident of Ohio, Melanie, whom you just heard from, has a Master's degree in Public Policy but under the current law she could not return to her home town to teach. American Board's program allows for people like the young man in Arizona and Melanie, who have a passion for teaching and vast professional experience, to quickly demonstrate their knowledge and teaching skills and move into a teaching position. It also allows for people who have a credential in one subject matter to take the online courses to be trained in another subject matter, allowing them to continue teaching but in a new subject area. Most importantly, American Board allows small communities to grow their own teacher supply, certifying community members instead of recruiting outsiders who will inevitably move on.

As a principal, I have hired and fired a great deal of traditionally-trained teachers. I can say that the American Board program provides schools with new teachers who are devoted to the profession and their students, who have strong subject-area skills, and who are committed to teaching in their home communities. Members of the higher education community do their very best to ensure that traditionally trained teachers are prepared for their jobs. But as a principal and a superintendent, I have had the job of reviewing performance and ensuring the children have the best quality education. American Board certified teachers perform better than or equal to traditionally-trained teachers on 95 percent of teacher-

quality indicators. And while I have seen that in action, it's not just my opinion. We have supporting data conducted by a traditional school of education.

Let me address some of the opposition arguments that we have heard here in Ohio.

You will hear that HB 628 is premature to the already enacted alternative educator licensing program. The Alternative Educator License program has yet to be fully enacted. The pedagogy training institute has not been fully implemented and results from the program have not been identified. Conversely, the American Board program is currently operating in 13 states and has demonstrated track record in preparing new teachers to be successful in pedagogy areas such as curriculum development and classroom management. HB 628 provides a fully-proven alternative and enhancement with the current alternative educator licensing program in Ohio. The two programs do not conflict; rather, they augment one-another to provide new teacher supply to the State.

Another argument is that HB 628 does not create qualitative standards for the training program. However, American Board's standards are nearly identical to those of traditional teacher training program. These include classroom management, curriculum design, and assessment implementation. The language contained in the bill is similar to authorizing language within other states where American Board operates, including Wisconsin where American Board was signed into law by Governor Walker in 2017.

Further, the effectiveness of the qualitative standards included within the American Board program is demonstrated through the quantitative evaluation which shows American Board teachers:

- Performed equivalently to traditional, college-prepared teachers across most (75%) evaluated aspects of teacher quality
- American Board rated higher on four aspects (20%) of teacher quality, relative to bringing real-world experiences into the classroom, community connection, and job appreciation
- Traditional, college-prepared teachers were rated higher on only one aspect (5%): pedagogy.
- Nearly all principals (151 of 155; 97%) expected to offer their ABCTE-prepared teachers a second contract

- Nearly all principals (150 of 154; 97%) expected to retain their ABCTE prepared teachers after the three-year mark

Lastly, opponents will argue that American Board is nothing more than a test-prep program; it is not a teacher preparation program. American Board is a competency-based program. Candidates demonstrate their pedagogy knowledge and subject-area knowledge by passing tests. This is no different than a traditional university math major who passes math tests to graduate and then gets a job as an accountant without having previously spent time shadowing other accountants. School principals indicate that American Board teachers are good for their schools, even without student teaching experience. So, while American Board doesn't fit a traditional mold of "a real teacher preparation program," it works for the thousands of schools across the country that rely on their American Board-certified teacher.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that the alternative teacher credentialing program outlined in HB 628 will complement the existing paths to teacher credentialing in Ohio and will give education administrators in the Buckeye State quality choices to address teaching needs in the State. As such, I urge your support of this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.