

## **Louise Valentine: Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 512**

Chairman Blessing, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Clyde, and members of the Government Accountability and Oversight Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony in opposition to House Bill 512.

My name is Louise Valentine. I am a graduate of Elyria City Schools and the mother of two wonderful five-year-old boys who attend Westerville City Schools. As a parent, a concerned citizen and a candidate for office, I am strongly opposed to House Bill 512.

I am deeply concerned by this drastic and dangerous bill that strips power away from the elected State Board of Education and puts it in the hands of an unelected bureaucrat. Currently, Ohio's education system is regulated by the State Board of Education – a group of democratically elected leaders. These elected leaders are the sole voice for the students and parents in our education system.

The State Board of Education has been integral in regulating for-profit charter schools and ensuring accountability. Unfortunately, that is clearly the reason for this legislation. Because the State Board of Education did its job and demanded that ECOT pay back the millions of dollars they took from our public schools without undergoing audits, legislators who received thousands of dollars from ECOT, like Andrew Brenner, are now fighting to take power away from the Board.

Here's the bottom line: this legislation is an attempt to take power out of the hands of voters and put it in the hands of unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats. That is unacceptable.

This is an incredibly dangerous power grab that would leave the students and parents of Ohio without a voice in their education system. We must fight to defeat this legislation and protect the voter's power in government.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this dangerous bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.