



Senator Matt Huffman
12th District
S.B. 216 – Sponsor Testimony
Senate Education Committee

Chairwoman Lehner, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Education Committee, it is my pleasure to offer sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 216, the Ohio Public School Deregulation Act. S.B. 216 is a comprehensive bill designed to reduce the amount of unnecessary mandates and regulations affecting Ohio's public schools. All too often what sounds like a good idea in Columbus translates instead to burdensome paperwork and tedious tasks that distract teachers and superintendents from their primary role in our schools—educating.

Over the past few years, I continually heard complaints from teachers, principals, and superintendents about how much time they wasted every day filling out insurmountable paperwork and complying with redundant mandates. In July, I hosted a meeting of almost every public school superintendent in my district. Over the course of almost three hours, the superintendents laid out for a laundry list of forms and procedures that fill their work days with needless grief and labor. Since that meeting in the summer, I have worked directly with a focus group of those superintendents to refine that list into the legislation before you today. I hope that my remarks today and upcoming testimonies make it extremely clear that this idea is the product of school teachers and administrators, and I am simply the elected carrier of their message.

The bill addresses a myriad of education topics and standards, either contained in the Revised Code or currently sheltered in agency rule. I have submitted a concise summary of the bill's provisions along with my testimony, which you should be able to view now and at your convenience after committee. Broadly, S.B. 216 will address the following subjects: teacher licensure and aide permits, the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System, state assessments, student management and safety, College Credit Plus, and preschool operating standards.

Providing a quality education to all Ohio children is a goal that we members of the General Assembly and our partners across the street share, but what we view as a smart idea on paper does not always translate into our school districts in practice. At the end of the day, our teachers and school administrators are the people who directly work with and educate our children, not us. Those teachers and administrators, for years, have been calling for relief from time-wasting state tasks that take them away from the delivery of a meaningful and effective education. The Ohio Public School Deregulation Act is an important step forward to providing that relief.

Thank you for your attention and consideration. I will be happy to answer any questions you might have at this time.

