

Chairman Blessing, Vice Chair Jones, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 23. My name is Grant Hillmann and I have been attending Columbus academy for 3 years, in that time I have been a part of Academy athletics all 3 of those years.

I met Luis my sophomore year when he joined my advisory. He has been my friend ever since and we talk on a daily basis. Given that Luis is a swimmer and I am not, I did not know that he was excluded from competition until only recently. I found it quite unfair that all students are not given the opportunity for a full American high school experience that by all rights should include competition with their teammates in their sport of choice. Not only is he missing out on a chance to win athletic awards for outstanding merit, but he also misses important social opportunities that are a part of being in a high school sport.

Students like Luis have come to this country for an outstanding education and to be a part of our nation's distinct culture and institutions, removing their ability to compete is an unnecessary precaution for an unlikely scenario. Why should concerns for what some schools might do with foreign athletes take priority of allowing good F-1 visa students like Luis to participate in a fair way as a part of their high school journey?

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.