

Chairman Jones, Vice Chair Manchester, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to House Bill 322.

My name is Mark Buxton, and I'm a retired teacher living in Worthington, Ohio. I taught elementary and middle school in Westerville for thirty-five years, and I have worked with the RESA program since 2013.

Having a structured format to provide mentoring for new teachers is invaluable. I helped mentor student teachers and new teachers to my district, but the Resident Educator Program provides a focus to those efforts. In addition, RESA provides a tool for teacher assessment that is based on the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession. It presents an unbiased method for assessing teachers new to the profession and brings objectivity to a subjective process not found in local programs. It requires third-year teachers to complete a one-time submission that is scored by Ohio educators with at least ten years of experience, using a passing standard set by the state of Ohio. The RESA removes local biases and ensures all Ohio teachers are evaluated fairly and impartially using the same Ohio standards.

Great care is taken to instruct assessors, so they fairly and equitably apply evidence from the teacher submissions to the rubrics. Assessors undergo training every year and must pass an assessment test before they can begin scoring the RESA. If they don't achieve a passing score after two attempts, they cannot score any teacher submissions until they try passing again the following year.

In reviewing testimony submitted on May 13, I noticed some educators cited outdated anecdotes related to the process and feedback from several years ago. The original RESA included five submissions during a teacher's third-year, including two videotaped lessons. In 2017, the original RESA was eliminated, and the new RESA was developed based on feedback from stakeholders across Ohio. Today, the RESA includes only one submission with one video and two short forms to provide context and reflection on the lesson. In addition, districts do not need to complete OTES evaluations for teachers taking the RESA for the first time. Scoring results from the current one-time submission are shared more promptly than in the past and include more comprehensive feedback from the assessors. Teachers can use the feedback to strengthen areas in need of improvement, ranging from instruction, to student assessment, to demand for complex thinking from the students. Mentoring shouldn't end once the RESA is completed, and candidates should use the feedback to continue their professional growth. The end result is improved learning experiences for our students based on Ohio standards. The Resident Educator and RESA programs need your support to continue their invaluable role in maintaining high standards for teaching professionals.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mark Buxton