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Senate Education Committee
Senate Bill 121: Written Proponent Testimony
Scott DiMauro – President, Ohio Education Association
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Good morning, Chair Lehner and members of the Senate Education Committee. My name is Scott DiMauro. I am in my 29th year in education, which includes 16 years in the classroom as a high school social studies teacher. I currently serve as President of the Ohio Education Association (OEA). On behalf of the OEA's 123,000 members, thank you for this opportunity to provide proponent testimony on Senate Bill 121. The bill would require the State Board of Education to create health education standards for K-12 schools.

OEA believes that health education standards are critical to the academic success and lifelong well-being of children. Ohio is the only state that does not have health education standards. State law does not permit the State Board of Education to adopt such standards. Currently, nominal guidance is provided to school districts about the topics that may be discussed in health education curriculum. Many of these topics have been added piecemeal through the passage of stand-alone bills.

The need for health education standards couldn't be clearer. Multiple studies have shown that Ohio must do more to address the health of its citizens. According to *America's Health Rankings* by the United Healthcare Foundation, Ohio ranks 48th in drug deaths, 40th in citizen obesity, 43rd in the number of individuals who smoke and 38th in physical activity. It is time to address Ohio's public health needs by educating our students, based on best practices, before they too become part of these statistics.

In summary, OEA supports the creation of comprehensive health education standards to provide school districts the necessary guidance to ensure that all students have quality health education that fosters lasting healthy behaviors. OEA urges passage of Senate Bill 121. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

