



Don Jones & Bride Rose Sweeney
State Representatives

Chairman Kunze, Vice-Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Senate Higher Education Committee, I thank you for allowing my colleague and I to offer sponsor testimony on HB 9.

After 23 years in the high school classroom I've had a huge amount of students who have gone to college. What is unfortunate from what I've witnessed and in today's society it seems to be becoming the norm for kids not to finish their degrees in four years. HB 9 addresses this issue in a few ways.

The first is that it will require the Dept. of Higher Education to set up a general education course transfer tool. Which will

- (1) assist in the transfer of coursework and degrees between state institutions of higher education,
- (2) help minimize inconsistent judgement about the application of transfer credits, and
- (3) assist in allowing transfer credits to be applied in the same manner at each state university.

The Bill also requires a state university to report to the Chancellor of Higher Ed. any time the university refuses to accept or grant credit for any general education coursework that is completed at a different state institution of higher education. Additionally, the state university must provide the student that did not receive college credit for the completed coursework with contact information for the Department of Higher Education, so the issue may be resolved.

These provisions will help students to transfer their general education course credits from one public university to another, thus staying on track even if they have to change schools because let's face it- life happens and students shouldn't be penalized for what is probably a very hard decision in the first place.

The second provision addresses an issue that happens at the end of some students' college careers. Sometimes a student may have one more course left to take, but they are not offered or the class is already full. What HB 9 does is makes it so that the student is

able to pay for that class then, but may take it when it is available. The student would not have to pay any additional fees or have any extra per-credit hour charges.

I am very happy with this bill. We have worked extensively with the higher education community and the Ohio Department of Higher Education to come to the fine bill we have today. I'll hand it over now to Rep. Sweeney.

Chairwoman Kunze, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Williams, and Members of the Senate Higher Education Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 9. As one of the most recent college graduates in this General Assembly, I have encountered students who were left behind, put at a disadvantage, or unable to enter into the workforce because of issues that we can resolve, which is why this third part is so important.

House Bill 9 requires state universities to audit their student records biannually to identify students who have not been enrolled at the university for four or more semesters and have not completed a bachelor's degree while meeting certain GPA and credit hour requirements. Once these students have been identified, the university will see if the courses those students have completed make them eligible or close to eligible for an associate's degree. If the student is eligible, the university must inform that student.

This requirement will benefit students by allowing them to enter the workforce with an associate's degree rather than no degree at all. House Bill 9 is a small step towards the "Complete to Compete" goal of having 65 percent of working aged adults with a degree, certificate or postsecondary credential by 2025. This bill will become a part of each state institution's completion plan, so that we as legislators can have a full understanding – backed by data – of the issues and barriers that college students face in Ohio.

House Bill 9 will help restore the Ohio promise of a quality, affordable education. Chairwoman Kunze, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Williams, and members of the Senate Higher Education Committee, we ask for your support on House Bill 9 and would be glad to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.