**Proponent Testimony – HB 9 – Senate Higher Education Committee**

**January 28, 2019**

**Dylan Ratliff *for the* Undergraduate Student Government at Ohio State**

Chairwoman Kunze, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Williams, and other members of this committee, good morning and thank you for permitting me to speak today as a proponent of House Bill 9. My name is Dylan Ratliff and I serve as the Director of Governmental Relations for the Undergraduate Student Government at Ohio State. In this role, it is my responsibility to represent the interests of the 53,669 undergraduate students that study at the six campuses of our incredible land-grant institution.

As a land-grant institution, it is Ohio State’s responsibility to serve students from across our beautiful state and provide them with an education that will enable them to prosper in their careers and Ohio to prosper as a result. These students are not just those who begin their academic careers at Ohio State, however, but also the over 2,000 who transfer to Ohio State. It is those students who this bill primarily addresses.

The goal of House Bill 9 is to create a more universal means of general education courses at institutions of higher learning, such as Ohio State, simplifying the transfer process for students. By passing this bill, policy will be established to ensure that all students studying at a public college or university in the State of Ohio have the ability to transfer to another without any unnecessary institutional barriers. While this may not mean much to many of our students, it would mean the world to any student who’s already doing the incredibly challenging thing that is transferring schools.

That said, I would not be doing my duty to my fellow students without also mentioning House Bill 9’s points regarding individuals commonly referred to as non-traditional students. House Bill 9’s provisions for institutions to inform disenrolled students about their eligibility requirements for associate degrees, to assist disenrolled students in receiving an associate degree, certificate, or credential, and to waive fees for an eligible individual who needs just one class to graduate will make it much easier for those students to complete their degree programs and then get better paying jobs to support their families and the Ohio economy.

In closing, I’d like to once again ask on behalf of the over 53,000 undergraduate students at Ohio State for your support in passing House Bill 9. Through its provisions on transfer students and non-traditional students, it would benefit these individuals tremendously and, in turn, this great state that we all call home. Thank you again for your time today and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Go Bucks!