



**Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee
Opponent Testimony on HB 442**

**Ohio Association of School Business Officials
Buckeye Association of School Administrators**

December 16, 2020

Chairman McColley, Vice Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio and Members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee, thank you for this opportunity to express opposition to House Bill (HB) 442, as amended. My name is Jim Rowan, Executive Director of Ohio Association of School Business Officials. Signing on in support of my testimony today is Kirk Hamilton, Executive Director of the Buckeye Association of School Administrators.

Collectively, our organizations represent public school superintendents, treasurers/CFOs and other school business officials from around the state. We have a strong interest in ensuring that school treasurers, as chief financial officers of Ohio school districts, and business managers have the qualifications and expertise necessary to successfully manage and lead our public schools. Because of this, we strongly oppose the amendments to HB 442 that eliminate state-required licenses for school treasurers and business managers.

The financial stability and operation of a school district is crucial in the education of Ohio's students. School treasurers and business managers are responsible for the proper use of public funds needed to operate our schools. Qualified school treasurers and business managers ensure the overall financial health and stability of a school district. If qualified individuals are not in these roles, there is a serious threat to the financial stability of a school district that can result in fiscal emergency under Ohio law, which has a detrimental impact on an entire generation of students. Licensure of these individuals protects against this risk and reinforces trust in our public institutions and communities.

Our association's primary purpose is to ensure that school treasurers and business managers have the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully manage and operate our schools. There are three pathways to licensure through the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), all of which require a baccalaureate degree and a minimum level of accounting, school finance and law coursework. Briefly, the three pathways include: (i) field experience through a 300-hour internship, (ii) two years of significant, global fiscal officer responsibility in an organizational setting, and (iii) the ODE-approved pathway through our association.

Our association worked closely with ODE to ensure that the curriculum developed closely mapped to the Ohio Standards for School Treasurers and School Business Managers. A copy of the Ohio Standards for School Treasurers and School Business Managers is attached for your reference. Through the mapping of the Ohio Standards to the OASBO curriculum, we developed five courses that each candidate through our pathway must take, including: Essentials of Budgeting and Forecasting, Essentials of Financial & Management, Essentials of Business Operations, Essentials of School Funding and Finance, and Essentials of Human Resources. After completion of these five courses, a candidate must then pass an assessment and successfully complete a capstone project that requires the application of their knowledge in creating and presenting a five-year forecast. The content of these courses covers the rules of school budgeting, forecasting, and managing revenues and expenditures under Ohio law, as well as the numerous other state and federal compliance laws, rules and regulations.

Treasurers are responsible for maintaining the public trust in the financial integrity of the school district by following and complying with acceptable financial accounting, auditing, and reporting procedures.

School treasurers are entrusted with protecting the fiscal health of the district. Licensure ensures that the individuals serving as treasurers and business managers are able to fulfill this expectation. Licensure demonstrates that the treasurer and business manager know and are able to demonstrate the principles associated with school finance, budgeting, financial planning, accounting, auditing, financial reporting, cash management, investments, debt management, grant management and the technology to maintain the efficient financial operations of the school district.

Treasurers are integral members of the district leadership team. They advise district administration, the board of education and community on the district's finances so that they understand the district's financial position and sustainability, as well as the potential impact decisions have on instructional programs and personnel. In order to ensure the individuals serving in this leadership role have the requisite skills and knowledge to successfully lead and manage the finances of our school districts, we need to maintain the high standards required through all three of the pathways for licensure in Ohio and urge you to reject H.B. 442

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer questions from the committee.