

Good evening, Chairwoman Manning, Vice Chairman Bird, Ranking Member Robinson, and fellow Members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee,

Thank you for your time today and for your consideration of House Bill 497. This piece of legislation would positively change Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee Law by removing the consequence of grade level retention, as well as eliminating the fall administration of the Ohio State Test in English Language Arts for third grade students.

As a parent who is actively involved in my sons' elementary school Parent Teacher Organization, I have witnessed firsthand the hard work of our teachers, students and families as we collaborate to support the reading achievement of our youngest students. As an independently licensed mental health professional in the state of Ohio, I have also witnessed firsthand the negative impact of stress and anxiety on our students at all levels. Excessive and repetitive standardized testing and fear of retention consequences negatively impact the educational experience in Ohio and negatively impact our students' mental health.

Please place trust in Ohio's Educators to do their jobs to support the reading success of our students. They have high expectations for learning for all of our students and strive daily to provide high quality instruction and intervention to support them in their reading journey. Excessive testing does not add to the educational achievements of our youngest students. It merely adds to the stress and worry of 8 year old's. It is time for a change in this legislation. It is time to protect Ohio's 8 year old's from this unnecessary burden. Please do your part to protect them.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 497 and for considering these changes that will positively impact Ohio's students.

Sincerely,
Kelsey Kalgreen, MA, LPCC-S
Concerned Parent