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OHIO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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The OEA will lead the way for continuous improvement of public education while advocating for members and the learners they serve.

Senate Finance Committee
Senate Bill 111 Proponent Testimony
March 16, 2021

Good afternoon, Chair Dolan and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Scott DiMauro. I am in my 30th 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 120,000 members, thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on Senate Bill 111.

Senate Bill 111 is an important measure that would appropriate approximately $683 million in federal pandemic relief funds for Ohio's public schools and $19 million for Educational Service Centers, Joint Vocational Schools and Ohio County Boards of Developmental Disabilities. It is imperative that the federal funds are made available immediately to school districts so that educators can help students overcome pandemic related opportunity gaps and meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs.

I would be remiss if I didn't address the deep inequities in our education system that this crisis has exposed and exacerbated. School districts need to be able to address the learning needs of all students—including students with special developmental needs; students with health challenges; and students whose circumstances deprive them of access to technology, adequate nutrition, mental health support or other essential supports. Ohio can't overcome these inequities without sufficient and reliable state funding. We must work together to support students in the best way possible. Ohio needs to enact the Fair School Funding Plan.

In summary, the federal funds contained in Senate Bill 111 are vital to the Covid-19 response and will play a substantial role in ensuring that school districts can safely and equitably be open for students. We urge support of Senate Bill 111. Please contact me if you have any questions.