



Ohio Mid-Eastern Regional Education Service Agency

2230 Sunset Blvd., Suite 2 Steubenville, OH 43952

Phone: 740-283-2050 - Fax: 740-283-1500

Testimony to the Senate Local Government Elections Committee
March 21, 2022

RE: Opponent testimony regarding SB 260

Chairwoman Gavarone, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Maharath, and members of the Senate Local Government and Elections Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony regarding SB 260.

My name is Wendy Barr. I am the Cooperative Services Coordinator of OME-RESA, one of 18 Information Technology Centers and one of six cooperative purchasing agencies in Ohio. OME-RESA serves 60 public school districts, private schools, public community schools and municipalities in 11 counties of Appalachia Ohio.

OME-RESA is governed by a 14-member Board of Directors that consists of 2 Treasurers and 12 Superintendents representing the respective counties. Organized as a regional council of governments (COG) under ORC 167.04 and a member of the Ohio Council of Educational Purchasing Consortia (OCEPC), a regional COG under ORC 167.07.

OME-RESA provides its members with joint purchasing and support services in the areas of:

- Gas and Electric utilities
- Building maintenance, construction, office and educational supplies
- Athletic and health supplies, equipment and service
- Food and food service supplies
- Connectivity and technical purchasing and support
- Server hosting and security services

Our members are small rural entities that rely heavily on the services OME-RESA provides them. Due to limited resources, many members consider OME-RESA a branch of their central office, providing services that bring efficiency, scalability and technical expertise. Any administrative fees generated from the programs either are rebated to member entities or used to support the services provided.

In its current form, SB 260 could put Ohio school districts and their boards of education at risk of violating ORC 3313.46, as out-of-state joint purchasing agencies do not guarantee adherence to Ohio bid requirements and would increase districts' legal and audit expenditures. Local Ohio businesses could be at a disadvantage if the need to require public advertising is eliminated, thus reducing the opportunity for Ohio businesses to be aware of the public bid announcement.



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I ask the committee to please consider amending this legislation before moving it forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony to SB 260.

Respectfully submitted.

Wendy Barr - Cooperative Services Coordinator

OME-RESA ITC COG

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