

From: Melanie Hunt

Date: December 3, 2022

Re: SB 178

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessings, and members of the Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for opportunity to provide opponent testimony on Senate Bill 178. My name is Melanie Hunt and I am a homeschooling parent in Delaware. I do not represent any organization or lobbying effort and appreciate the access an everyday citizen has to provide input on legislative and policy matters. I have been homeschooling our six children for sixteen years and counting and have graduated one who is now working. We will be graduating our second oldest in May and she will then be off to college. Our family has experience utilizing Ohio's College Credit Plus program for dual high school credit as well as enrolling our oldest in public school for a short while during his sophomore year.

During that particular school year while our oldest was enrolled at the local public high school, I had the opportunity to speak in front of the State Board of Education which was considering implementing Social Emotional Learning (SEL) standards. I was able to provide the board with a parent's perspective and hand each member a recent white paper from The Pioneer Institute that offered a unique perspective of Social Emotional Learning in the schools.

I say all of this because, as a parent with a child in the public schools, I was able to engage with our elected representatives on the state school board whose decisions directly impact Ohio students in the classroom. As an Ohioan, I am pleased to be here today engaging in civic discourse with you, our state's elected representatives.

Recently, I emailed Dr. Christina Collins, my district's representative on the State Board of Education and she responded to me very quickly. If Senate Bill 178 is passed, Ohio families will lose that kind of access to representation in education. Our trusted representatives will also lose their voices when it comes to matters of education policy in our state.

Our country was founded on the principal of **the consent of the governed**. This state's Constitution was also written with that principal in mind. Moving most functions of our current 19-member State Board of Education to one appointed person would remove democratic representation in what happens in our public schools.

For this reason, I urge this committee to reject Senate Bill 178.