



Shaker Heights Schools

Testimony Opposing SB 1
Submitted by: Shaker Heights Board of Education
President: Dr. Emmitt Jolly
Vice President: Lora Cover
Member: Alison Bibb-Carson
Member: Jeff Isaacs
Member: Heather Weingart

Chairman Swearingen, Vice Chair Santucci, Ranking Member Upchurch, and Members of the Economic and Workforce Development Committee, thank you for allowing us to provide opponent testimony on Senate Bill 1.

The Shaker Heights City Schools are committed to Equity and Excellence for our students. A bill meant to stifle the voices of Ohio residents and decrease representation is dangerous to these very commitments we make to our students, and we do not believe we are alone.

As you know, SB1 would restructure and rename the Ohio Department of Education to Education and Workforce, deprioritizing education, and shifting the Ohio Department of Education to an executive agency. This bill would reduce the duties of the State Board of Education to appointments, licensure, employee conduct and transfers.

Boards of Education depend on our elected State Board of Education to represent the concerns of the districts we represent. We are not one monolithic community in Ohio. Our constituents have vastly different needs across the state. Democratically elected representatives allow for that diversity of thought to be considered. A state run agency does not.

In addition, the new Department of Education and Workforce Development will have no authority to hold chartered non-public schools or home schools to the standards needed to ensure the highest level of education is provided to all students. The stakes are too high to lower our standards.

Once again, politics is being put ahead of education in Ohio. Senate Bill 1 was introduced after democratically held elections welcomed three State Board Members who prioritize equity. A centralized committee severs the direct connection our State Board has to our citizens and undermines democracy.

We ask you to maintain the current powers of the State Board of Education with our eleven elected State Board members and their appointed colleagues. Vote No on SB 1.