

**House Finance Committee
HB 312 Written Proponent Testimony
Shannon Cox, Superintendent
Montgomery County Educational Service Center
May 8, 2024**

Good morning, Chairman Edwards, Vice-Chair LaRe, Ranking Minority Member Sweeney. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 312. My name is Shannon Cox, and I am the superintendent for the Montgomery County Educational Service Center (MCESC). We operate to serve the needs of school districts and private schools (and their respective students) in and around the Montgomery County area.

For many years, we have partnered with other local organizations on important issues facing the citizens in our region. We've worked on early childhood education efforts and programs that go all the way up to providing post-secondary opportunities for adults. Partners range from Learn to Earn Dayton to the area's Business Advisory Council's members.

HB 312 provides a framework for a state-supported system of partnerships which can exist across the state. We believe the existing collaboration in which the MCESC is one partner, will be served and supported through this legislation. The bill does not infringe on the existing positive works that are already occurring in our region; in fact, in addition to establishing a statewide structure, HB 312 could provide needed revenue opportunities for these important local efforts.

ESCs are specifically listed in HB 312 as recommended partners within this regional structure. ESCs are and can be partners with other agencies and organizations locally to address issues and challenges facing citizens from an early age up through adulthood. We appreciate the bill sponsors' recognition of the valuable role ESCs can play within regions of the state.

These ongoing initiatives occurring in various parts of Ohio help a range of citizens become productive in society and therefore result in the overall good for the state as a whole. We urge you to support HB 312 as a way to provide a state supported structure, including some resources to multiply the work. HB 312 may encourage other such partnerships to be formed where they do not currently exist.

Please feel free to contact me with questions.

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