

Chair Bird, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson, and Honorable Members of the Ohio House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 11, also known as the Backpack Bill.

My name is Daniel Kessler and I live in Bowling Green, Ohio. I am expressing my support of the Backpack Bill today because I believe it will provide parents and guardians in Ohio with a beneficial and needed choice for their children to receive their education in an environment or school setting that best meets their individual needs. While I am thankful to live in a city that I believe has a great public school option for families, the public school setting is not the best learning environment for every student, and provides parents and guardians with limited say or input into the worldviews presented and values taught in the school setting. Additionally, many communities in Ohio are not blessed with a quality public school option for their children. For these reasons, I believe the passage of House Bill 11 to be instrumental in allowing the State of Ohio to provide the ability for parents and guardians to seek out the educational setting that will best serve their children, by funding students and not systems. Doing so would not only provide all Ohioans with access to outstanding educational environments, but also empower parents and guardian's in Ohio with the ultimate ability to have a say in the values and worldview that comes with it.

To be clear, my passion for this is not an attack on public schools. I believe that our public schools all do the best they can to meet the needs of their students and communities, and are filled with teachers who love their students and long to see them thriving. The reality is, while public school is the best choice for some students, it is not the best choice for every student.

In addition to funding students, I believe House Bill 11 will also provide a financial win for all forms of education in the state, including our public schools. With the local tax base that supports our public schools remaining untouched by the funding available to families through the Backpack Bill, public schools will benefit from having more money to spend per-student on their education.

In summation, I am fortunate to live in a community with a great public school option, and to have a job that provides for me to send my children to a private school that I believe is the best fit for them. Additionally, one of my children has benefited greatly from participation in the Jon Peterson Scholarship Program. Many Ohioans are not as fortunate. As noted on the backpackbill.com website, I believe that the market forces created by House Bill 11 will result in a dramatically improved educational landscape that will benefit all students, regardless of where they choose to attend. I would encourage each of you to take some time review the research on the widespread benefits of school choice that can be found by visiting: <https://backpackbill.com/research-facts/>

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony on the Backpack Bill. I urge you to vote yes on this legislation and would be happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Daniel Kessler
Bowling Green, Ohio