



*BEFORE THE HOUSE PRIMARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE
PROPONENT TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 17*

Good afternoon, Chairman Bird, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson, and Members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 17. My name is Justin Barnes, and I am the Director of Workforce, Small Business, and Technology Policy for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce.

As you may know, for 129 years, the Ohio Chamber has served as the state's leading business advocate, and we represent over 8,000 companies that do business in Ohio. Our mission is to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness, and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans. As part of our mission, we seek to make Ohio the best place in the country for businesses to operate and grow.

We want to ensure we take this opportunity—just as during deliberation in the Senate Education Committee—to thank the sponsor of this legislation, Senator Wilson, for his work on this important issue. We support Senate Bill 17, as we did with Senate Bill 365 in the 134th General Assembly, because it serves to develop the next generation of entrepreneurs and business owners here in Ohio. Building upon the enacted Senate Bill 1 from the 134th General Assembly, legislation that implements financial literacy curriculum and graduation requirements for our K-12 system, the bill before you today would require the State Board of Education to incorporate the education of high school students about free market capitalism as part of that curriculum. It is vital that our future generations understand the concepts of free market capitalism and how businesses operate.

While there are free resources available for school districts to utilize to integrate these concepts into their curriculum, the bill authorizes the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce to incur minimal costs to develop a model curriculum that contains the concepts prescribed by the bill.

We look forward to working with you on this proposal to ensure future generations of Ohioans understand and appreciate the benefits of free market capitalism and the opportunities this economic system provides. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this legislation.