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Committees:
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Public Health Policy
Technology and Innovation

Rachel Baker State Representative

Thank you, Chair Manning, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the committee. It is a privilege to join Representative Brennan in offering sponsor testimony on House Bill 591.

House Bill 591 would require the Department of Education and Workforce to issue an annual sponsor report card that would report the performance of community school sponsors in the prior school year. Sponsors oversee community schools ensuring they are adhering to their contracts, providing oversight, making decisions around renewing contracts and opening or closing schools, and setting academic, fiscal and governance structures for community schools. Sponsors could be school districts, universities, educational service centers, non-profit organizations, boards of education, or other entities. As we move toward an emphasis on parent rights and choice, it is imperative that parents are provided transparent information upon which to base their choice of the best school for their child.

This sponsor report card would be posted on the Department's website in a similar manner to a state report card issued for public schools. All report cards would be required to include detailed information about the sponsor and the sponsor's evaluation, including its overall rating, ranging from four stars and exceeding standards to zero stars and falling significantly below standards. This bill also changes the requirement around frequency of community school operator report cards which currently are only required every 3 years if the school received an effective rating or higher previously. Parents deserve to have current data around the school they are choosing for their child and should be aware if there is decreasing performance of a school and House Bill 591 would require that this operator report card be issued annually for all schools regardless of the previous ratings.

Rather than the annual performance report, the Department of Education and Workforce is required to include an operator report card.

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the committee thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 591, a commonsense bill that adds transparency and information to Ohio's parents to inform their decisions around which school to enroll their children. Rep. Brennan and I welcome any questions at this time.