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House Finance Subcommittee on Primary & Secondary Education

Chairwoman Richardson, Ranking Member Issacsohn and members of the House Subcommittee on Primary & Secondary Education,

I urge you to take a careful look at the HB 33 provisions expanding vouchers for the following reasons:

Ohio needs for accountability for ALL public funds, including those going for vouchers:

- There is often talk of competition being good, but that only works if we are competing on a level field
- Accountability is more than testing. Public Schools have a responsibility to educate all students in our enrollment areas because we accept public money. As soon as a voucher is accepted, this should also be the case for non-public schools. There should not be a selective enrollment process and those schools should not be permitted to dismiss or deny a student once they accept the voucher
 - My past experience is that once a non-public school realizes that the student is an issue (behavior, academic, social) they can dismiss the student and the local public school is required to accept the student. This means that a student can attend a non-public for three years of high school, in the third year the non-public realizes that the student is in jeopardy of not graduating, so they dismiss the student to the public school. In the one year that the public school has the student, the student fails to graduate. The public-school bears all of the responsibility and accountability for that student.
- In some school districts, non-public schools are receiving more per capita in state funding via vouchers than the public school is receiving through its state share. If that scale has tipped, shouldn't accountability follow?
 - Since the funding will follow the student, make the line very clear and give the nonpublic schools the responsibility of transportation, auxiliary services, special education services or other related services.
- Public schools are accountable to the public: Financial audits are required, and public schools have dozens of regulations related to curriculum, instruction, assessment, licensure, and have significant reporting responsibilities.
- Public schools must accept all students and are obligated to provide for every student's needs- and do so willingly, without bias or pushing any ideology. We also have regulations related to disciplinary procedures, have legal protocols, and may not discriminate.
 - Private Schools do not have the same requirements as those listed above, but are regularly now receiving as much or more state funding than public schools
- Proponents say Parent choice is enough to hold non-public schools accountable, but we have clear examples in ECOT, and other places, that show that's not the case. It's not reasonable to simply give public money to private organizations without holding them accountable-we don't do it in health care, or tax breaks, why should education be different?

- Public Schools are not afraid of competition, we just do not want to compete on a 100-yard field when the non-public schools are allowed to compete on a 50-yard field. If competition were the goal, a level playing field and an apple to apple comparison would be ensured.