

Opposition Testimony to Ohio SB1 2023

Ruth Hardy

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I researched and voted for my state school board members to represent my interests as a citizen. I do not trust the consolidation of power in an office handpicked by the Governor - it destroys the balance of power & removes my right to weigh in on educational policy. Also, the Governor brought us \$117 million lost to ECOT corruption & over 300 failed charter schools, draining away tax dollars paid by citizens who earnestly care about their kids' educations. Are we supposed to relinquish educational policy to the governor's office after that record?

As an Ohioan who believes every student deserves an honest, high-quality education and understands the importance of a thriving business economy, I urge you to reject Senate Bill 1.

Shifting control of public education to the governor and stripping the roles and duties of democratically elected State Board of Education leaders is a blatant attack on democracy: this plan silences families, voters, and taxpayers, and removes my ability to have a voice at the state level.

The State Board of Education is a governing entity embedded in the Ohio Constitution. It became a part of the Constitution by an amendment passed by citizens of Ohio in 1953. The amendment transferred the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the state education agency staff from the Governor's office to the newly established State Board of Education. The proposed state takeover will take power away from 11 publicly elected school board members and will negate the votes of over 200,000 Ohio citizens. Our state school board members were elected to serve the will of their constituents - not the Governor nor his political party. In fact, when Ohio voters passed the Constitutional amendment, they sought to separate the Department of Education from the governor's office. The Constitution must be followed as passed by the citizens of Ohio.

Please do not pass SB 1 out of committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

