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*The OEA will lead the way for continuous improvement of public education while advocating for members and the learners they serve.*

## **Ohio Senate Education Committee**

### **House Bill 8 – Opposition Testimony**

**Scott DiMauro – President, Ohio Education Association**

**December 12, 2023**

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O’Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Ohio Senate Education Committee. My name is Scott DiMauro. I am a social studies teacher in Worthington with 16 years of classroom experience and currently serve as President of the Ohio Education Association (OEA). On behalf of the approximately 120,000 members of the OEA, thank you for the opportunity to provide opposition testimony on House Bill (HB) 8.

OEA believes the framework established in HB 8 unnecessarily entangles state government in regulating communications and relationships between parents and educators. Government mandates on these matters interfere with the professionalism of educators and weaken the principle of local control of public schools.

Chances for student success are of course best when parents, guardians, and other family members are engaged and active in the school community. Quality interaction and involvement includes meeting with educators, volunteering for school activities and trips, participating in Parent-Teacher Associations, and more.

OEA will continue to strive for effective partnerships between schools and parents that are based on trust and mutual respect. However, OEA is concerned that HB 8 could sow distrust between schools and parents instead of fostering collaboration. More likely, various aspects of HB 8 could lead to increased challenges for marginalized students, arbitrary book bans, and ideology-based censorship. Government should trust educators more rather than impose top-down mandates that interfere with the partnerships between schools and parents.

For these reasons, HB 8 is unnecessary and OEA opposes the bill. Thank you again for your consideration.

