

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee,

As a parent, community member, and educator, I am writing to urge you to oppose Senate Bill 295, which threatens the future of Ohio's public schools and undermines the rights of educators across our state.

SB 295 proposes expanding criteria for labeling schools as underperforming, forcing districts to take extreme measures such as closing schools, transferring control to private operators, or replacing staff. Alarming, it would override collective bargaining agreements, stripping educators of their rights and destabilizing school communities.

This bill mirrors failed policies, which penalized districts without addressing the root causes of opportunity gaps, including poverty, mental health challenges, and the educator shortage. Top-down mandates that rely on flawed achievement data have not worked and will not work. I work in a district where poverty, mental health, and lack of opportunities impact students daily year after year. Policies like these do not address the real problems my students face.

Even more concerning is the speed at which this policy is being considered in the final weeks of this legislative session. Rushing through a policy with such wide-ranging implications and significantly limited opportunities for public input violates normal legislative processes and silences the voices of Ohioans who care deeply about our schools. Please do not pass major legislation without time for public consideration and input.

Our students and educators deserve better. We need solutions that address systemic challenges and invest in our schools, not misguided policies that punish them. I strongly urge you to oppose SB 295 and instead support efforts that prioritize equity, opportunity, and resources for every child in Ohio.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this harmful and rushed bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

I will now take any questions you may have.

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