



December 9, 2024

**Testimony on SB295
Ohio Senate Education Committee**

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Dear Chair Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today. Advocates for Basic Legal Equality ("ABLE") is a non-profit regional law firm that provides free legal assistance in civil matters to help individuals and groups living on low incomes in 32 counties in Western Ohio achieve self-reliance, and equal justice and economic opportunity.

As attorneys committed to equal justice and equal opportunity for all, and as attorneys who represent parents of children struggling with various issues in school, ABLE urges you to vote against this bill. The rushed and private process for this bill does not do justice to the critical areas of community concern covered by this legislation--most notably determining which schools should be subject to closures, and which state-imposed requirements are put in place for struggling schools. Parents and those who know the local community need to have input and involvement in plans and actions to turn around their local public schools. As I draft this an hour before the deadline for submission, it is impossible to give details about concerns about this bill, as no statutory language in a Substitute Bill, no Analysis to help the public, nor Fiscal Note has yet been made available to the public. The public should have the opportunity to read, think, and prepare comments to improve such important and wide-reaching legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony, and we urge you to vote against this bill until or unless there are multiple hearings at which the public can truly and thoughtfully address the bill's specifics.

Sincerely,

Renee Murphy

Managing Attorney – Meaningful and Appropriate Education Practice Group

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