

February 27, 2024

The Honorable Jerry Cirino
Chair, Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee
1 Capitol Square, 034
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Statement to the Ohio Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee

Chairman Cirino,

The Association of American Publishers [AAP] supports the Senate Committee substitute for SB 104 which in part deletes the section 3365.072 in reference to using open source materials “in lieu of purchase-only textbooks.” The bill, as substituted, promotes choice by offering an array of affordability options available to faculty and students, including inclusive access which delivers materials on the first day of class and below market rate. Such programs have contributed to a decline in student spending, improved retention and completion rates and had a positive impact on overall student success.

Association of American Publishers

The AAP represents the leading book, journal and education publishers in the United States on matters of law and policy, advocating for outcomes that incentivize the publication of creative expression, professional content, and learning solutions. Publishers have played a vital role in fostering the education ecosystem and public interest in the United States for more than two centuries.

The American educational publishing industry is known and respected throughout the world for its comprehensive library of pedagogically sound content and courseware to better support faculty and students across a vast number of subject areas. Many of them essential for students preparing to solve increasingly complex challenges involving math, science, medicine, law and so much more.

Today's Course Materials

AAP and its education member companies have long understood that students often struggle to pay for college. College affordability is a priority for AAP member companies, who are focused on lowering the total cost of education and the cost of course materials in particular.

Publishers have developed a new generation of digital course materials and are aligned with new course material delivery models that increase access and affordability, improve outcomes, and better meet the faculty and student needs of today. These new, interactive digital course materials help faculty meet students where they are, facilitating a personalized learning experience for students that ultimately improves student success. They also cost much less than traditional bound textbooks.

As a result of this commitment from publishers, student spending on course materials has [dropped significantly](#) over the last few years, with independent research firms **Student Monitor** and **Student Watch** both reporting an average 50% decline in student spending on course materials over the past decade. Similarly, the College Board's most recent report, [Trends in College Pricing and Student Aid 2023](#), clearly illustrates that the average amount students actually spend on course materials is just \$310 per year, making the category a rare bright spot in terms of affordability.

Innovative Delivery Models to Improve Student Access and Affordability

In 2015, the U.S. Department of Education issued federal regulations (34 CFR 668.164(c)(2)(i)) authorizing institutions of higher learning to charge students for books and supplies as part of tuition and fees. Programs developed in accordance with the federal regulation are commonly called "Inclusive Access." Through these "Inclusive Access" programs, publishers provide access to digital materials, on, or before, the first day of class to all students enrolled in a course. Students can then pay for course materials at the same time they pay tuition and fees. By delivering course materials digitally, education publishing companies substantially lower the cost of materials as compared to the price of traditional print-based textbooks.

Affordability programs like Inclusive Access:

- Save students up to 70% on course materials - ensures prices are below market rate as consistent with federal law.
- Provide all students access to their instructor-selected course materials on the first day of class while also giving students the option to drop the course and not pay for the materials or opt-out during the institution's established add/drop period.
- Allow students to use financial aid monies to pay for course materials and not incur an out-of-pocket expense.
- Support student access to course materials from any internet-enabled device and provide offline capabilities.

Ensure Value for Faculty and Students

Education publishers ensure the content and courseware they develop meets the current affordability and access needs of students. These course materials must also carry a significant benefit for faculty and the higher education ecosystem as a whole.

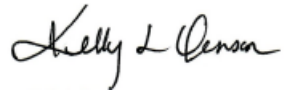
Education publishers add value in the following ways:

- Develop courseware with interactive assignment types and assessments that help faculty personalize the student learning experience.
- Publish scalable, pedagogically sound content with relevant application for today's students, accompanied by instructor support materials such as lecture notes, presentation slides, secure testbanks and more.
- Build content and courseware to the most current accessibility standards.
- Assure student data privacy standards are upheld and personal information is secure and not repurposed in any way.

AAP supports the Senate Committee substitute for SB 104 and appreciates the time and attention that went into revising the bill.

Thank you again. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kelly L. Denson".

Kelly L. Denson
Senior Vice President, Education Policy & Programs
Association of American Publishers