



OHIO CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NETWORK

A Network of Center for Christian Virtue

Chair Fowler–Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Education Committee,

I'm Corrinne Vidales, Legal Counsel for the Ohio Christian Education Network, a network of approximately 190 Catholic and Evangelical Schools across the state.

I'm here to testify on a few standing bills that would make improvements to the state operating budget. Specifically, SB 44 and 68. Amending the provisions of these bill into the budget would fix several issues that students in our schools currently face. We are working with the sponsors and other interested members to have these drafted as amendments and introduced into the budget. I can pass the amendments along to members of this committee for introduction as well.

In brief, this is what each of these amendments would accomplish:

SB44 - provides an important fix for many Ohio families and students that have been preventing from accessing the same educational choice opportunities that their fellow Ohioans have been granted. And unfortunately, these students have not been able to access this is solely because they have been diagnosed with a learning difference that requires intervention services at school. These students, who have qualified for an autism or a Jon Peterson scholarship are not eligible for an EdChoice scholarship. Because they are not eligible for an EdChoice Scholarship, the family must bear the full cost of tuition, unlike their classmates without a Peterson Scholarship who receive an EdChoice Scholarship.

SB68 – Creates Educational Savings Accounts for students who attended nonchartered schools in Ohio. It puts money into the hands of parents to determine the best educational fit for their child. Let the Jon Peterson and Autism scholarship students, these students do not currently have access to an EdChoice scholarship. An ESA for these students would be less than the current EdChoice scholarship (in the current bill, about 90%).

Including these amendments in the budget would further the excellent work the General Assembly has done over recent years to promote a robust system of Educational Freedom in Ohio. I commend this committee for their diligence in that regard and I will accept any questions you have.