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**Committees:**

Education, Ranking

Finance

Financial Institutions

Phillip M. Robinson Jr.
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Ohio House District 19

House Bill 164 Sponsor Testimony
House Education Committee
April 1, 2025

Chair Fowler-Arthur, Vice-Chair Odioso, members of the Ohio House Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill (HB) 164, to reinstate the Joint Education Oversight Committee, commonly known as JEOC. My joint sponsor, Representative Joe Miller, and I look forward to productive conversations with the committee and all related stakeholders.

During the 133rd General Assembly, the Ohio House eliminated JEOC and took a step back when it came to education policy in Ohio. Both old and new challenges have risen in K-12 education since the 133rd General Assembly and I believe JEOC could help resolve and even improve these issues. JEOC was a bipartisan, bicameral body overseeing emerging education policy issues in Ohio. The committee comprised of members of both the majority and minority caucuses and consisted of five senators and five representatives. The nature of JEOC helped create both bipartisan and bicameral ideas and solutions to crafting legislation through public hearings and dialogue.

The JEOC staff's from the 131st to 133rd General Assembly's had impacted Ohio's education policy and the bills we created for the better in several ways. Some examples include:

- Their research in the AI Scoring Engines Review brought to light the need for human scoring with students that normally receive high scores in writing but received 0 scores by the AI engines.
- Their research on the 2016 graduation requirements showed how the system had a negative impact on urban school districts across the state.
- JEOC worked with the Cupp-Patterson, Fair School Funding Plan team and made various research contributions to the effort of fair school funding reform.
- With different legislators reaching out to JEOC on different education policies, the list could be extensive. In 2018, there were 20 research requests made to JEOC from legislators.
- Before JEOC was ended, last it made research and policy recommendation contributions to graduation requirements, ADC reform, state report cards, and more.

The re-establishment of JEOC would see the committee consist of the following members:

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Primary & Secondary
Education, Ranking

Finance
Finance Subcommittee on
Primary & Secondary
Education

Financial Institutions

Higher Education

- Five House Representatives appointed by the Speaker consisting of three members of the majority party and two members of the minority party;
- Five senators appointed by the Senate President, three of whom are majority party members and two minority party members

In an odd-numbered year, the Speaker will designate a Majority House member as the chairperson, and the Senate President will designate one Senate Member of the minority party as the ranking member. In even-numbered years, the Senate President shall designate a Majority Senate Member as the chairperson, and the Speaker will designate a Minority House Member as the ranking member.

HB 164 requires that the committee authorize a plan of work which includes research, review, study, and analysis of current or emerging education policy issues important to Ohioans. Additionally, the committee can review and evaluate education programs at public school districts, community (charter) and STEM schools, state institutions of higher education, and other K-12 education programs that receive state financial assistance in any form. The chairperson also can request any state agency or political subdivision to provide data determined to be useful to any policy review or hearing. Finally, the bill requires both the Director of DEW and Chancellor of Higher Education to appear before the committee upon the chairperson's request. The appropriation of \$376,663 in FY 2026 and \$378,668 in FY 2027 covers JEOC's operating costs, based on past funding, and a per diem rate of \$150 per member, and necessary traveling expenses. Whatever appropriated funds are not used will be appropriated to the same item for the next fiscal year.

In conclusion, JEOC is an essential tool for providing the best information to create education policy. JEOC improves and streamlines bipartisan and bicameral policymaking, and provides specialized research and policy solutions for our children's education. Chair Fowler-Arthur, Vice-Chair Odioso, and members of the committee, once again we thank you for your time and for the opportunity to testify before you today. We ask for your support of HB 164 and are happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.