



**Proponent Testimony
H.B. 117**

Jane Christyson, Chief Executive Officer, Girl Scouts of North East Ohio

Chairwoman Fowler-Arthur, Vice Chair Bird, Ranking Member Robinson and members of the House Education Committee - thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of H.B. 117 – a bill that will require daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag in our schools.

At the heart of the Girl Scout movement is a deep respect for country, community, and civic responsibility. From the youngest Daisy to the most seasoned Ambassador, our members begin troop meetings and many public ceremonies with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, often paired with the Girl Scout Promise and Law. This ritual reinforces our members' respect for the flag, the principles of democracy, and their role as engaged citizens.

Girl Scouts are also educated about the history and symbolism of the American flag, including how to properly handle, fold, and retire the flag with dignity. Many earn badges related to citizenship, government, and American heritage, often participating in flag ceremonies, parades, and service projects on patriotic holidays.

We believe that learning about the Pledge of Allegiance and the American Flag fosters more than patriotism, it cultivates responsibility, community service, and leadership in young people. These are the same values that H.B. 117 seeks to promote by encouraging schools to create consistent opportunities for students to engage with these important symbols of our national identity.

We appreciate that the bill upholds freedom of choice by reaffirming that no student is required to participate in the pledge, a position that aligns with our commitment to inclusion and respect for all individuals.

The Girl Scouts of North East Ohio commends the General Assembly for their efforts to strengthen civic education and encourage respectful observance of national traditions. We respectfully support the intent of this legislation and thank Representatives Brennan and Richardson for recognizing the value of patriotism and citizenship in shaping the next generation of leaders.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

girl scouts 
of north east ohio



M. Jane Christyson
Chief Executive Officer
Girl Scouts of North East Ohio

girl scouts 
of ohio's heartland



Tammy H. Wharton
President & Chief Executive Officer
Girl Scouts of Ohio's Heartland

girl scouts 
of black diamond



Beth Casey
Chief Executive Officer
Girl Scouts of Black Diamond Council

girl scouts 
of western ohio



Aimée R. Sproles
President and Chief Executive Officer
Girl Scouts of Western Ohio