



**Senator Jane Timken**

**Sponsor Testimony: Senate Bill 158**

Chairwoman Fowler Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 158.

Since the introduction of the smart phone and the explosion of social media apps, we have witnessed the unprecedented rise of in the use of cellular telephone technology. It is easier than ever to access a near infinite amount of information at our fingertips. While these advances in technology can have a positive impact, they are not without negative consequences.

Students today are more connected to this technology than ever, but not directly with each other in real person to person interactions. With various social media apps, and constant connectivity, students are pulled in every direction, every second of the day, including in the classroom. An average student receives about 11 notifications per waking hour. That is one every five minutes, 192 per day. Social media apps are designed to capture the attention of students which is disruptive in a learning environment and threatens their ability to develop healthy relationships with their peers.

This legislation is a commonsense approach to “unplug” our children from the constant flow of distraction during vital time they are in the classroom. It will reduce distractions from instruction and facilitate the building of in-person relationships. Even when phones are in the pocket, they vibrate and cause distractions.

The facts are clear. School districts that have restricted student cell phone use during the instructional day have seen a return to noisy lunchrooms, the fostering of real face to face conversations and relationships. Eliminating smart phones in

schools leads to improved academic performance, offsets the instances of cyber bullying, and gives students the tools they need to be successful and develop both academically and socially. And thrive.

The Senate Education committee adopted two amendments to ensure that that no student is prohibited from using a cell phone for the purposes of monitoring or addressing a health concern and require school districts to develop a policy for cell phone use in the event of an emergency.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to deliver sponsor testimony on this important piece of legislation. The future is in our children's hands, and I ask for your support in helping them live up to their full potential.

I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.