

# THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF



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## Education Committee Testimony

Chairwoman Fowler Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson and remaining committee members good morning. I would first like to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today on behalf House Concurrent Resolution. 7, a resolution to support the hard work of the American Legion Buckeye Boys State and American Legion Auxiliary Buckeye Girls State. I would also like to apologize that our staff coordinator and both directors are not present today, Both Boys and Girls State begins this Sunday and all staff are currently at Miami and Bowling Green State University finalizing preparations for the programs.

I am Jacob Brault the Legislative Coordinator for the American Legion Department of Ohio. Although I have not been around the Legion and Buckeye Boys State for many years like my counterparts and other Legionnaires I have heard and witnessed the young men that have went through our Boys State program and am happy to see that days, months, or even years later still have such a lasting impact on their daily lives with many graduates coming back for multiple years after to hold positions integral to the operation of Boys State.

As far as background, in 1936 Buckeye Boys State began and was originally hosted at the Ohio State Fairgrounds with the students residing in the barns that were there. Since then this program has evolved into a group educational and leadership academy containing roughly between 1,000-1,300 students from over 600 schools across the great state of Ohio, with support from Legionnaires, past Boys State delegates, State Representatives and other state agencies to include the Ohio State Highway Patrol. With this support we are able to ensure each student can get a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental principles of running for election, voting, legislative sessions, and debating. They are also afforded the opportunity to practice these teachings and coupled with a strong emphasis on leadership traits these young men effectively run mock governments with positions ranging from state governor down to a city council member.

This program is completely free to all students who wish to attend and is paid for by many individual posts who sponsor the young men to attend. The main requirement is to be in between your junior and senior year of Highschool and to be male for Boys State and Female for Girls State.

I respectfully ask that the committee vote in favor of House Concurrent Resolution 7.

Chair Fowler Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the committee thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of H.C.R. 7 today, I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.