

# Ohio Computer Science Advocacy Coalition



House Finance Committee  
April 2, 2025  
Ohio Computer Science Advocacy Coalition  
Interested Party Testimony on HB 96

Chair Stewart, Vice Chair Dovilla, Ranking Member Sweeney and members of the House Finance Committee:

My name is Julia Wynn and I'm the Director of State Government Affairs at Code.org, a national nonprofit focused on expanding access to computer science and AI education. Today I am speaking on behalf of the Ohio Computer Science Advocacy Coalition, a diverse group of organizations representing industry, K-12 education, higher education, and the nonprofit sector that recognizes the value of computer science both for Ohio students and the state's economy.

We are returning to this Committee with an urgent request: that **the Legislature renew the computer science teacher licensure waiver**. This waiver is a commonsense, uncontroversial policy that has been renewed with bipartisan support in every two-year budget since 2020. Used by dozens of teachers every year, this waiver is an essential option that allows teachers who have completed professional development to teach computer science while they work towards earning a full endorsement. The waiver is an example of the type of flexible pathway Ohio likes to encourage in order to ensure sufficient teaching capacity in schools. Our Coalition is requesting that the Legislature renew this waiver through 2032, so that schools

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have certainty that they can use this flexible, alternative endorsement option through multiple budget cycles. **If a waiver extension is not included in the final version of the budget, it will expire on June 30th, and many teachers will immediately become ineligible to teach computer science.**

Not renewing the waiver all but assures that computer science teacher capacity will plummet, especially in small and rural schools. But Ohio can't risk falling further behind surrounding states in access to computer science. We already have one of the lowest rates of high school access in our region, behind every surrounding state except Michigan. We must ensure commonsense policies like this continue to be an option for schools.

Supporting the waiver for computer science ensures that we can continue to expand access to this increasingly relevant subject for students across Ohio. We urge you to include the amendment to renew the computer science teacher licensure waiver in the omnibus budget bill.