

House Bill 42

Melissa Meyer

Opponent Testimony

OHR Government Oversight Committee

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November 18, 2025

Chair Hall, Vice Chair Ferguson, Ranking Member Humphrey, and members of the House Government Oversight Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Melissa Meyer, and I have been a Middle School Educator in Northeast Ohio for over two decades.

I am strongly opposed to HB 42.

As a career educator, I have dedicated my life to ensuring that every child who walks into my classroom feels safe, supported, and ready to learn. HB 42 undermines that mission in ways that would have real and lasting consequences for students across Ohio.

HB 42 would create far-reaching and deeply harmful ripple effects throughout our school communities. We are already hearing countless stories nationally of *U.S. citizens and legal residents being mistakenly swept up* in the government's deportation push. When families see these errors happening, it becomes understandable, and entirely predictable, that many will become afraid to send their children to school or school activities.

This bill would not make our communities safer.

It would make families fearful, students absent, and schools less stable.

When children stay home out of fear, their education suffers immediately. Their mental health deteriorates. Attendance gaps widen, learning loss accelerates, and the trusting relationships that make education possible begin to unravel. As a middle school teacher, I see how fragile that trust can be, and how essential it is to a child's growth.

Last year, I worked with a student who was already hesitant to attend school due to stress and fear at home. With consistent support and reassurance, we were able to bring them back into a healthy routine. Policies like HB 42 would undo that hard work in an instant. Students should never have to choose between their education and their family's sense of safety.

For these reasons, I strongly urge this committee to vote NO on HB 42.
Ohio's children deserve stability, opportunity, and a school environment free from fear, not legislation that risks pushing families into the shadows.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and for considering my testimony.

~Melissa Meyer