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Sponsor Testimony
Senate Bill 34
Senate Education Committee
February 11th, 2025

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 34.

This legislation will require public schools to display one of a variety of historical documents in each classroom. The reason for this bill is to expose our students to the documents which have, in America, served as the backbone of our legal and moral traditions as a people.

In my mind, it has been inexcusable that more focus has not been shown towards these historic texts within the academic arena in our state, denying the vital legal and moral essence that our children need to thrive as good American citizens.

As it is written in the bill, the board of education of each school district shall select to display in each classroom at least one of the listed historical educational documents. This list includes The Mayflower Compact, Declaration of Independence, Northwest Ordinance, Mottoes of the United States and State of Ohio, Ten Commandments, Magna Carta, Bill of Rights, U.S. Constitution, and Articles of Confederation.

The boards of education will also ensure that each display is accompanied by a description explaining the historical importance of the document. Simply put, this legislation intends to reintroduce disciplined historic principles—those same principles upon which our Founding Fathers drew inspiration and put to writing—back to the classroom.

Importantly, this legislation ensures that no public funds will be required to be expended for the costs of these displays, although public funds may be used. The bill allows each local board of education to accept donated funds for the purchase of these displays or to accept donated displays themselves. It is essential that the displays are funded and promoted by the communities themselves, having a say in what gets displayed in their schools.

Cost is a crucial factor in this legislation, and we do not want to put any undue burden on our public school districts. Realistically, many of these displays need not be any bigger than a simple 8 ½” x 11” print out. More sizable documents such as the U.S. Constitution, Articles of Confederation, Northwest Ordinance, and Magna Carta may require more formatting, as long as it remains reasonably visible.

The Department of Education and Workforce shall post on its website materials to assist school districts with the formatting and educational information requirements. How lavish or detailed these displays become will be left up to the individual teacher’s discretion and creativity.

Thank you again for your time and attention. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.