



Bill Roemer

State Representative

Jack Daniels

State Representative

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chairman Blessing, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on House Concurrent Resolution 22, which encourages students in grades one through twelve to read the Declaration of Independence in the classroom during the 2025–2026 school year in recognition of its 250th anniversary.

This resolution is about more than just marking a historical milestone. It's about ensuring that the next generation of Ohioans understands the foundational principles of our constitutional republic, the ideas that have shaped our nation and continue to guide us today.

The Declaration of Independence is not only a document that launched a revolution; it is a bold expression of the ideals of liberty, justice, and equality. As we approach its 250th anniversary on July 4, 2026, we have an opportunity, and a responsibility, to make sure our students engage directly with its powerful language and lasting message.

For many years on the Fourth of July at Noon, in Twinsburg, I would join Senator Kristina Roegner and Secretary of State Frank LaRose to read the Declaration of Independence aloud at a community gathering. Recently, I've participated in a reading organized by Representative Sean Brennan, the Ranking Member of the House Committee on Education. These meaningful traditions, honor our nation's founding, and invite reflection on the sacrifices and aspirations that defined that moment in history, and still define us today.

In my reading of the Declaration, I was able to learn more, specifically on some of its more challenging language. Words like "usurpations," "despotism," and "unalienable rights", terms that don't show up in everyday conversation, but which carry tremendous meaning in the context of our founding. Exploring that kind of vocabulary opened a door for me to greater understanding.

I believe our students deserve that same opportunity to engage deeply with the words and ideas of the Declaration.

This resolution doesn't impose a mandate. It simply encourages schools to make space during the school year for this powerful document, to read it, discuss it, and learn from it.

The resolution also aligns with national efforts to celebrate the Semiquincentennial, including Task Force 250, established under President Trump to ensure this anniversary is recognized with the significance it deserves.

In closing, H.C.R. 22 is a small but meaningful step toward civic literacy. Let's give our students the opportunity to read the very words that lit the flame of American independence and to understand why those words still matter today.

Thank you and we are happy to answer any questions.