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State Senator Catherine D. Ingram

9th Senate District
136th General Assembly

Sponsor Testimony – Senate Bill 326, Education Committee

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, and members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony alongside my joint sponsor, Senator Cirino on Senate Bill 326.

As my joint sponsor has indicated, computer science knowledge is crucial. Students will develop critical-thinking abilities, confidence through the creation and testing of self-made solutions, creativity, collaboration skills, and perseverance – these skills benefit students in any field they choose to pursue. Through this bill, we will prepare our students to meet the needs of the 21st century economy.

Expanding and strengthening computer science education in Ohio high schools gives the state a competitive edge by building a pipeline of skilled talent for growing industries. Early access to these courses builds problem-solving and technical skills employers need, improves college and career readiness, and reduces reliance on out-of-state talent. Expanding these opportunities statewide also supports economic growth, business attraction, and long-term competitiveness for Ohio.

With Senate Bill 326 not being effective until the 2028-2029 school year, this allows for flexibility with the tailoring of course implementation. And although the bill calls for a “unit”, there can be ways to fulfill this beyond seat time. There are programs that students may attend independently during the school year, as well as summer camps that provide comprehensive training and meet required standards. There should be a mechanism to evaluate these programs, and DEW should consider incorporating them into the model curriculum. The goal is to prioritize student learning outcomes.

The world is changing rapidly as technology becomes embedded in nearly every aspect of daily life, work, and communication. As technology continues to evolve, we have a responsibility to ensure students are prepared for the future they will inherit. By investing in forward-thinking curriculum, we will no doubt work for the betterment of our youth.

Chair Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, and members of the Senate Education committee, thank you for allowing us to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 326. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.