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Senate Bill 326 Sponsor Testimony
Senate Education Committee
Tuesday, February 10, 2026

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 and Ranking Member of this committee, Senator Ingram, on Senate Bill 326, legislation that would require students to complete a computer science course that includes AI fundamentals prior to high school graduation.

If enacted, the bill would require all students entering 9th grade on or after July 1, 2029, to complete one unit of computer science and for all public high schools to offer at least one unit of computer science prior to the start of the 2028-2029 school year.

Computer science is defined by Ohio Revised Code as meaning: logical reasoning, computing systems, networks and the internet, data and analysis, algorithms and programming, impacts of computing, and structured problem-solving skills applicable in many contexts from science and engineering to the humanities and business. Computer science concepts are also the building blocks of AI.

AI has undoubtedly impacted every industry, and will continue to do so for decades.

It's apparent now more than ever how critical it will be for every generation moving forward to be well versed and educated on how to work with AI. AI literacy is increasingly important for the workforce, and computer science is a way to provide students with essential AI literacy, even if they plan to work outside of the tech industry.

The bill provides multiple pathways for students to fulfill the required computer science course without eliminating an elective credit altogether. Satisfying the requirement is incorporated into math, science, and foreign language requirements, but can also be taken as an elective. The bill specifies the one unit can be taken at any point between grades 8-12, as it can also be offered as college credit plus.

This legislation tasks the Department of Education and Workforce with developing and adopting a list of courses that will satisfy the requirement. The Department must seek guidance from the

course recommendations in the 2022 Report of the State Committee on Computer Science. The report can be found on your iPads and on the committee website as a supplemental document to this testimony.

It's currently estimated that over 60% of Ohio public high schools already offer at least one unit of computer science. Last General Assembly's support of the Teach CS program supported over 800 teachers in becoming credentialed to teach computer science. This past operating budget, we made the same investment and anticipate the same, if not higher, return on teachers credentialed, paving the way for proper teacher capacity before these requirements are in place.

While understanding this requirement will take time to implement, the bill calls for a 7-year runway allowing high schools to prepare for every student taking a course. And a 3-year runway before schools have to have this subject area up and running. If for some reason a high school is unable to offer the required traditional in-person course, the school may submit an action plan seeking approval from DEW to offer the course virtually or in partnership with a community college.

12 other states require students to complete a computer science course, including our neighbors Indiana and West Virginia. It's time for Ohio to do the same to ensure our youth become a skilled workforce knowing how to use and work with technology in a safe and critical way.

I will now turn it over to Senator Ingram to highlight other areas of the bill.