

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to allow me to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 68, which would establish the Non-chartered Educational Savings Account Program in Ohio.

My name is Tim Stahl and I reside in Hartford, Ohio which is in Licking County. I'm here today to acknowledge that while school choice was expanded in the last state operating budget cycle through the EdChoice Scholarship Program, there are still a significant amount of Ohio families who have been left out. My family is one of them.

Although we are in the Northridge School District in Licking County, due to many circumstances, my wife and I decided to homeschool our 4 girls. We have absolutely loved homeschooling, but this past year our oldest daughter expressed great interest in going to school. We decided to send our 5th grader to Columbus Classical Academy, which is a Non-chartered school. Although we knew we would have to pay tuition, this is where we felt like we had to send Lia because of what this school stands for and believes. That is the lovely thing about being able to have school choice, but in the same manner, we have no assistance in helping with this choice we have made. We believe, as parents, this is the perfect spot for our child, and Lord Willing our other three girls in the near future; however, the tuition would be unattainable for all of our girls at this point in our lives. With the passing of Senate Bill 68, my wife and I believe school choice would truly take place to include this wonderful school that is Non-chartered and allow us the choice and possibility to send all of our girls to Columbus Classical Academy.

All of us in this room have different beliefs, and this country allows us this freedom. That freedom should be extended to school choice for all schools in Ohio, including Non-chartered schools, such as Columbus Classical Academy. Although we have tried different schools in the past, including Dublin City Schools and Northridge, these schools just missed the mark on where we, as a family, believe a school should be for our children and their education. Finding Columbus Classical Academy has been a breath of fresh air and completely aligns with our educational goals. Although our 5th grader is the one attending Columbus Classical Academy, my wife and I feel like we are all a part of something bigger, with the hope that all of our girls can attend here. With the passing of Senate Bill 68, all our girls would have this opportunity.

Therefore, I urge the Committee to favorably report Senate Bill 68 to make school choice truly universal in the Buckeye State. Knowing that the state operating budget cycle is the avenue for advancing bold, transformational public policy, I urge the legislature to bring the Non-chartered Education Savings Account Program to fruition during this decisive and impactful process. It would make a world of difference for a significant amount of Ohio families.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 68. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

Kind Regards,
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