



Senator Andrew O. Brenner – 19th District
General Government Committee
February 26th, 2024
Senate Bill 107 – Sponsor Testimony

Chairwoman Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear, and members of the Senate General Government Committee, thank you for affording me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 107, which would require candidates running for state and local school boards to affiliate with a party on the general ballot.

School districts across the state elect board members in non-partisan races. This may lead people to believe we are keeping politics out of the classroom. However, non-partisan elections do not mean the candidates running in these races are nonpolitical. Instead, non-partisan elections can hide political beliefs from voters, leading to a mismatch between board members and the communities they are meant to represent.

Education is a critical component determining the trajectory of a child's life. Those who control school boards control the education that students are receiving. Parents and voters should be empowered to make as informed a decision as possible when choosing these candidates.

Additionally, we were made aware of some concerns LSC had with the bill. To address those concerns, we have prepared a sub bill that would require state and local school board candidates to go through the primary nomination process in order to require them to affiliate with a party. There was also a concern of what to do in the event of a ballot vacancy for these candidates. The sub bill clarifies ballot vacancy for these candidates will be filled by the same process other partisan primary candidates undergo, that being the appropriate party central committee filling the vacancy.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. I am happy to answer any questions.