

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
EDUCATION AND CAREER READINESS COMMITTEE**

**HOUSE BILL 176  
ADDRESS SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS AND CURRICULA AND TEACHER  
EVALUATIONS**

**PROPONENT TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL S. GOLDSTEIN, ESQ.  
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Chairman Brenner, Vice Chairman Slaby, Ranking Member Fedor, and distinguished members of the Education and Career Readiness Committee.

I am Michael Goldstein, and I am speaking today in support of House Bill 176. I have practiced law in Ohio since 1974. I am a retired career intelligence officer in the United States Navy and Active Navy Reserve for 30 years, with nuclear energy experience both as a Senior Attorney for the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company stationed at the Perry Nuclear Power Plant, and as an intelligence officer stationed on a nuclear submarine.

I am a consultant to eGeneration Foundation, an Ohio-based not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing the research, development and deployment of safe, clean and affordable energy based on Liquid Fluoride Thorium Reactor technology (LFTR), a Generation IV advanced nuclear reactor, for improving the human condition in the United States and throughout the world. In 2015, by adopting HCR 9, the General Assembly expressed its strong support for the commercialization of this technology in Ohio. I testified as a proponent for HCR 9 in both the House and Senate Public Utilities Committees.

Throughout my varied career I have worked hand in hand with technical personnel, in communications, aviation, nuclear energy, nuclear medicine, and occupational medicine, including mechanical, electrical, chemical, and nuclear engineers, and with nuclear power plant operators. I understand what sort of primary and secondary education is required to prepare students to become top notch mathematicians, engineers, physicians, and scientists. It is my opinion that the Common Core curriculum fails to meet these criteria, and that a future Ohio would be better off if we were to reject Common Core and adopt the pre-Common Core Massachusetts curriculum standards.

Most of the unfavorable factors that have negatively affected the education we give our young people originate in some manner, shape, or form from Federal Government intrusion and

interference with locally directed education. Common Core is just the latest, but perhaps the most intrusive, example resulting in negative consequences for our children and for our state.

The Federal Government is enticing states to adopt these standards with the promise of Federal funds, initially, perhaps, without an appreciation of the implications. This is a Faustian bargain at best. Once money from the Federal Government was accepted by the State of Ohio, curriculum control of what should be decided by local school boards, and influenced by active parents, has come under the control of a national bureaucracy.

The Common Core standards "dumb down" the curriculum so that more students can meet the test requirements, thereby allowing "success" to be declared. Courses are then taught to enable students to pass tests based on that substandard curriculum. Parenthetically, I fear that graduates of K-12 Common Core will not even be taught the meaning of terms such as the "Faustian bargain" to which I referred a moment ago.

The math curriculum, for example, will place our American children two years behind graduates from other countries which have a more robust math curriculum than Common Core's.

As I learned from education curricula experts and elementary and middle school math teachers, it was explained to me that Common Core math in the early school years involves procedures and homework assignments which are much too difficult for individual age groups, requiring convoluted math calculation by students. Whereas teachers previously had great success in getting their students to like math studies and to look forward to learning more, now young students are turned off by their math studies and have no personal incentives to move on to learn higher math.

And at the high school level, the curriculum is the opposite, not sufficiently rigorous to bring our students up to first world standards.

Common Core will not result in graduates who will be technically or philosophically qualified to analyze technical problems and create solutions. This concern translates across a broad spectrum of industries and vocations.

I fear for my grandchildren with the ever increasing intrusion of the Federal Government into every facet of our lives, which is in direct conflict with our federal Constitution and with states' authority based on Federalism. Teaching to the tests will force adoption of a curriculum set by the Federal Government. Examples of the texts and materials I have seen do not reflect our country's Founding Fathers' values and, rather, promote the secular progressive agenda. Common Core is more politically, than educationally oriented. I believe that its proponents do not have the best interests of our students, our future leaders, in mind.

Common Core is bad for our children, for those teachers who are dedicated to teaching them, for parents who want the best for their children, and ultimately for our state and for our country. We will fall further behind the rest of the world because we will not be teaching our children to think, only to parrot back material aimed at producing a graduate who can fill a low end niche job in the "Global Workforce."

Common Core is untested and unproven. It will encourage mediocrity, and at high financial cost. It will collect data on our children and make that information widely available. It is in conflict with our United States Constitution, and impinges upon the sovereignty of the State of Ohio.

It is my understanding that the Common Core curricula were written primarily by academics and assessment experts in what has become known as the “Education Industry,” and that the Common Core curricula were not tested in real schools prior to their general implementation. Few of the members on the Common Core review panels were classroom teachers or current education administrators, and the input of parents and local school board members was not part of the process.

In this country we are once again putting at risk the future of the research & development and manufacturing sectors of the United States economy by engaging in national social experimentation with the education of our children, who are our future. And not for the first time. Or the second time. Or the third time. Remember the “New Math,” taught in our schools, thankfully after I graduated? Tom Lehrer’s parody of the New Math curriculum of 40 or so years ago was tongue in cheek, but relevant today nonetheless: It doesn’t matter if the answer is right or wrong, it’s the process that counts. From the examples I have seen of the Common Core mathematics curriculum, it looks like we returning to that model, or trying to.

Mathematics can be taught well in our public schools. Most often it has been, when local school boards called the shots. I now fear that under the Common Core math requirements our children will finish high school two years behind the students of, e.g., China and India, and will thus be unprepared for rigorous university math, engineering, chemistry, physics, pre-med, or other technical programs. They will be displaced at university, and in the workplace, by students from other countries, who are better prepared.

Sitting at my children’s college graduation ceremonies I looked through the programs at the names of the graduates, especially those in masters and Ph.D. technical programs. Most of the names were Asian. Of course, some of these graduates were American citizens, but Asian countries take great advantage of our technical university programs in the United States. Their children, well prepared by their secondary math programs at home, come here and learn at our universities – and then either return to their home countries with their expertise, or take technical positions here for which our citizen graduates will be unqualified. If American companies need qualified engineers and scientists, they must, and do, often recruit from overseas.

Our American high school students need more rigorous, not less rigorous, math training in the higher grades. I am concerned that Common Core is taking us in the wrong direction. Thus I support House Bill 176 aimed at removing Common Core from Ohio, and substituting for it, at least as an initial step, the proven pre-Common Core Massachusetts standards, as amended.

Thank you for your time and attention. I will be pleased to respond to your questions.