



**House Primary and Secondary Education Committee
House Bill 154 Testimony
Ohio School Boards Association
Buckeye Association of School Administrators
Ohio Association of School Business Officials
April 9, 2019**

Chairman Blessing, Vice Chair Jones, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today regarding House Bill (HB) 154. I am Jennifer Hogue, director of legislative services for the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA). Joining me today for this testimony and in answering your questions are Barbara Shaner, representing the Ohio Association of School Business Officials and Thomas Ash with the Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA).

Our organizations represent public school district boards of education, superintendents, treasurers/CFOs, business managers, and other school business officials from around the state. Our members support the proposed provisions included in HB 154.

We could stand before you all day and talk about the pitfalls of HB 70 and the damage it has done to the communities of Youngstown and Lorain. What has occurred in these communities under the current academic distress commission law has not been helpful for improving these districts nor the outcomes for the students they serve.

Our organizations have been talking with policymakers over the past few years to discuss the need for change: the need to restore the community's representation through their locally elected board; the need to bring accountability for the CEO; and the need to improve outcomes for students in these districts and those students who will follow.

Currently the state has three academic distress commissions: Youngstown, Lorain, and East Cleveland. Looking at the most recent report card results, Dayton City Schools could join them in September of this year if their report card does not show improvement. Additionally, in 2020 we could see an additional nine districts subject to academic distress commissions: Ashtabula, Canton, Columbus, Euclid, Lima, Mansfield, North College Hill, Painesville, and Toledo. We urge you to make changes to the academic distress commission law that will benefit these districts and the students they serve.

We appreciate that this bill addresses both future schools and those districts currently subject to academic distress commission. We very much support the way that HB 154 moves from focusing on districts and instead looks to focus on the needs of school buildings.

Our members have expressed the lack of resources and support to meet the social and emotional needs of students for a number of years. We believe that HB 154 will go a long way to helping these buildings to meet the nonacademic barriers to student success. We urge you to act swiftly in passing HB 154 and moving toward a more positive system of intervention and support for students in these designated buildings.

Thank you for your time and attention. We would be happy to answer any questions you might have at this time.