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Gayle L. Manning
State Representative

Committees

Commerce & Labor, Chair
Correctional Institution
Inspection Committee
Higher Education
Primary & Secondary Education
Transportation & Public Safety

Chair Lehner, Ranking Member Fedor, and distinguished members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 123, the Safety And Violence Education Act, or SAVE Students Act.

According to the Ohio Department of Health, suicide is the second leading cause of death in Ohio among youth and young adults. More and more, we see youth suffering from depression, isolation, and a want to fit in with their peers. As a retired teacher of 37 years, I saw students who suffered the loss of a family member or struggled to fit in with their classmates. This can cause stress on students, leading them to feel alone.

HB 123 aims to reduce social isolation and ensure students are safe in schools. Here's how HB 123 will help:

1. It ensures school buildings serving students grades 6-12 contract with an anonymous reporting system so students can anonymously report threats or safety concerns.
2. School buildings, if not already existing, will have a threat assessment team that undergoes an approved training program. The list of training programs will be maintained by the Department of Public Safety (DPS), and the team will be trained upon appointment and once every three years thereafter.
3. The Department of Public Safety, in consultation with the Department of Education (ODE), and the Attorney General, will develop a model threat assessment plan that may be utilized in a building's emergency management plan.
4. Students and teachers will be trained once per school year in suicide awareness and prevention and violence prevention. They will also be trained in social isolation. The list of training programs will be approved by ODE and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. At least one training program on the list must be free, so schools will not incur a cost.
5. Schools serving grades 6-12, if not established already, will have a student-led violence prevention club. The bill allows for local control, so an existing club may satisfy this provision of the bill.

Governor DeWine signed an Executive Order in August that parallels many provisions of HB 123. Additionally, the \$675 million allocated to wraparound services in the budget passed earlier this year shows that we all have a common goal, which is to keep our students safe and ensure they are getting the resources they need when it comes to mental health and physical health. HB 123 had 5 hearings in the House Primary & Secondary Education Committee, and it passed out of the committee by a vote of 16-0. Earlier this month, it cleared the House by a vote of 85-7.

State Representative Gayle L. Manning
Ohio House of Representatives

This legislation allows flexibility for local control and provides students and teachers the resources they need to be safe.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and at this time, I am happy to entertain any questions.