

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Bird, Ranking Member Robinson and Distinguished members of Ohio's 134th General Assembly,

My name is Dan Heintz, and I am honored to be here with you again today in support of House Bill 73. This is an important effort to improve education in our beloved Buckeye State. I speak to you today in a number of capacities. I am a member of the Cleveland Heights - University Heights Board of Education. I am also an American History teacher at Chardon High School. Finally, I speak to you as the parent of a senior at Cleveland Heights High. As you can see, the burden of high stakes testing is an obstacle that impacts my public life, my professional life, and my personal life as well.

I am enormously grateful that you have held fast to your commitment to solving some of the problems associated with high stakes testing. Thank you for this! HB 73 is a giant step in the right direction. It recognizes our citizen's desire to remove some of the state mandates, while also balancing that with the need for flexibility at the local level. What I like most about this district level flexibility, is that it mandates district level transparency and accountability. This is excellent!

I also applaud HB 73's desire to reduce the number of state mandated tests from five to four. This brings relief to our students, returns instructional time to our teachers, and reduces the costs borne by our districts. While I do have some concerns around a combined American History and Government test, today I will limit my remarks to my enthusiastic support for this important bill.

Perhaps the area of this bill that will have the most immediate positive impact is the elimination of the third grade reading guarantee. I'm certain that this will inspire giant sighs of relief from teachers, parents and eight year olds from throughout the Great State of Ohio. This initiative began with clean hearts and great intentions, but just never achieved its intended results. I'm confident that you are all aware of last spring's research from The Ohio State University's College of Education. Their paper, titled "*Has Ohio's Third-Grade Reading Guarantee Led to Reading Improvements?*"

tells us “We found no meaningful or significant improvements to Ohio’s fourth-grade achievement from the time the third-grade reading guarantee was implemented.” I am submitting a copy of the report with my testimony.

So, in conclusion, thank you! Thank you for accepting my testimony, for holding fast to this important issue, for increasing flexibility, transparency and accountability at the local level, and for eliminating the third-grade reading guarantee.

Now I stand eager to address your questions.

https://crane.osu.edu/files/2020/01/Third-Grade-Reading-Whitepaper_032019_WEB2-1.pdf