



Senator Louis W. Blessing III – 8th Senate District
Senator Andrew O. Brenner – 19th District
Senate Finance Committee
March 9, 2021
Senate Bill 111 – Sponsor Testimony

Chair Dolan, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for hearing sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 111, which will provide additional federal funding for Ohio's public, private, and vocational schools for COVID-19 related expenses.

As part of Ohio's and the federal government's response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, funding for pandemic related relief expenses for businesses, healthcare needs, individuals, and education continues to be appropriated. To date, \$2.5 billion in funding has been approved by the General Assembly to be distributed to Ohio's communities and schools. The most recent influx of funding, which Senate Bill 111 encompasses, will focus on distributing leftover CARES dollars as well as monies from the more recent Consolidated Appropriations Act, passed by Congress this year.

Senate Bill 111 will appropriate \$857 million from those funding sources. Of which, the funds have been divided up to serve schools and continue general pandemic relief services. The \$857 million dollars will be spent in the following ways:

- \$683.1 million for Ohio's public schools
- \$154.8 million for Ohio's private schools
- \$19 million for Educational Service Centers, Joint Vocational Schools, and Ohio's County Boards of Developmental Disabilities
- \$173 million for the Ohio Department of Public Health to continue to expand COVID testing and vaccine distribution
- \$8 million for the Adjutant General to allow additional deployment of the Ohio National Guard rapid response personnel and resources to serve older Ohioans

As our public and private schools continue to come back to in-person learning, these dollars are absolutely vital to the process and to ensure that students can continue their educational careers, where they need to be, in the classroom. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to give sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 111, my joint sponsor and I would be happy to answer any questions you have at this time.