



Senate Bill #1 Proponent Testimony  
Margaret Jenkins, President Ohio Affiliate

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony in support of Senate Bill 1. Senator Wilson and Senator McColley’s bill proposing a semester-long required course in financial literacy for all students graduating from high school in Ohio is a critical step toward preparing and equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and resources to manage their present and future roles in both work and family life.

Today’s world is complex; Ohioans are faced with urgent challenges impacting health and quality of life:

- College graduates are facing unprecedented amounts of student debt.
- 18 percent of Ohioans are living with food insecurity (Feeding America).
- Housing for essential service industry personnel is in short supply.
- The COVID-19 pandemic is shining a light on health and economic inequities in Ohio.

Research supports that financial literacy education will provide Ohioans with more tools and resources to make informed decisions about their health and way of life therefore building resilient communities and strengthening the state’s economy.

I am Margaret Jenkins, and I am the President of the Ohio Affiliate of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences. I reside in Clermont County and have worked as the county OSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Educator for over 14 years teaching individuals and families the skills needed to build strong, resilient families. My specialization is Family Resource Management. Prior to teaching community-based education, I taught Family and Consumer Sciences in Cincinnati Public Schools within the high school career technical division, again teaching semester courses in Personal Financial Management, Family Relationships and Parenting. My 35 years of experience teaching the Family and Consumer Sciences Body of Knowledge drives me to applaud Senators Wilson and McColley for introducing this critical legislation.

Ohio's Financial Literacy Standards taught by a qualified financial literacy teacher will make a positive impact on Ohio's economy and on the financial stability of Ohioans into the future. Students learn, retain and practice skills that are taught through experiential learning and are connected to their lives. Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) is a 100+ year old field of study focused on the science and the art of living and working well in our complex world. Through research, experiential education, and technology, FCS teachers help their students develop the essential knowledge and skills to lead better lives, be work and career ready, build strong families and make meaningful contributions to their communities. FCS teachers are well-prepared in areas of study including personal and family finance, housing, child development and family relations, food science and nutrition, and health management and wellness, with sustainable practices, consumerism and leadership principles woven throughout the content areas.

SB1 suggests partnerships be used to deliver Ohio's Financial Literacy Standards. In addition to teaching in Ohio's middle and high schools, Ohio Family and Consumer Sciences professionals work in varied practice settings such as early childhood, Cooperative Extension; business and industry; government, and health and human services. In 2020 Ohio Family and Consumer Sciences professionals created an Ohio Alliance for Family and Consumer Sciences modeled after the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences National Partnership for Recruiting, Preparing, and Supporting FCS Educators by embracing and activating Ohio's statewide people-centered network of organizations. This Alliance is charged with providing a "lean and mean" method for training and providing professional development for identified priorities. Financial literacy education is an identified priority. FCS organizations can be counted on to work in partnership for the successful implementation of SB 1 delivering timely, relevant, evidence-based financial literacy education.

Ohio Association Family and Consumer Sciences (OAFCS) supports requiring a semester course in financial literacy. However, OAFCS asks that the new financial literacy requirement replace rather than supplement the current requirement. Maintaining that requirement will only cause confusion in implementing SB 1.

Thank you for this opportunity. I look forward to answering your questions.

Margaret Jenkins  
President OAFCS