

Testimony Regarding H.B. 110
May 4, 2021 1.

Good morning/afternoon Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony regarding H.B.110.

My name is Kevin Parkins and I serve as the Head of School of Central Catholic High School in Toledo, Ohio. I have been blessed to work in Catholic education for the past 14 years, holding various roles including teacher, admissions director, vice president of advancement, principal, and now Head of School. I am the proud father of three students who attend Catholic elementary school at St. Rose in Perrysburg.

I am here today to share why school choice is important to me and the families I serve. For over 100 years, CCHS has been providing a quality education to families who live in the City of Toledo. With nearly 25,000 alumni across the country, CCHS has left an amazing impact on our community, state, nation, and world. (Gene Kranz story)

While I am aware that other schools in other cities have built new campuses as neighborhood dynamics shifted, CCHS has remained a bedrock of our neighborhood. Our diverse student body, learning styles, socio-economic backgrounds, race, religion, ethnicity . . . sets us apart. We see the value each day in having students learning in our environment, an environment that they choose with their parents.

Thank you for your past support of school choice throughout Ohio. Whether it was the Cleveland Scholarship or EdChoice Expansion, these programs have provided an avenue to accomplish what we all wish to do: We are partners to an end . . . I believe everyone in this room is committed to supporting students on their journey of education.

- I ask that you continue to offer and fully fund these scholarship programs.
- Expand the programs to meet the demand, families who make a choice 'late' in the educational cycle should not be shut out.
- Increase the value of the scholarship. While it has been more than six years since the last increase to the scholarships, our cost to educate continues to rise. (Currently around \$12,000 per student.)
- We need a system that streamlines the application process, waiting months to inform families about educational decisions is heart-wrenching to say the least.

Thank You Chair Brenner and members of this committee for the opportunity to share some insights on school choice and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

In Christ,



Kevin F Parkins