

Testimony Regarding H.B. 110
May 4, 2021

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 Corneita Allen and my husband's name is Antonio Allen. We reside in Franklin County and are the parents of 3 wonderful boys. Our oldest son is in the 9th grade, our second oldest son is in the 6th grade, and our youngest son is about to turn 2 years old. We call him our surprise baby, and we are so glad he's here.

We began using the EdChoice Scholarship for our two oldest children when they entered kindergarten. The scholarship program allowed us to place our boys in an environment where we knew they would thrive. Our boys are excited to go to school and look forward to returning each year after summer break. They are excelling academically and greatly enjoy the enrichment programs. This scholarship has been a tremendous blessing to our family! Antonio and I attended public schools and know the challenges that come with public school settings. The scholarship program has given us an opportunity to avoid the pitfalls of an underperforming school environment and position our children for academic success.

Parental choice in education is very important to us. Children are like a plant in a garden, you have to know what environment is most suitable for their needs. Every plant cannot grow in every environment. And likewise, every child will not reach his or her highest potential in every environment. They have to be placed where they can blossom and grow. One size does not fit all. As tax paying citizens, we feel every parent should have a right to choose a school for their child that works best for them. The ultimate goal is to help our children grow into healthy adults who are positively contributing to their families, communities, and the world around them.

Tax payer funds designated for educating children should fund a range of educational options, whether that's charter schools, alternative public schools or private schools. No family should feel like their child is trapped in a school that is not working for them. Parents should be able to send their child to school with peace of mind, knowing their child is being educated in a place that fits their child's needs. We believe our children are brilliant and should receive the best education possible.

Antonio and I thank you, the Senate, for your past support of scholarship programs. It shows us that you value the children in our communities. We request the Senate:

1. Continue to offer and fully fund scholarship programs.
2. Increase the scholarship award amounts to cover the complete cost of education.
3. Expand the scholarship programs to meet the demands, so no family is turned away from the opportunity to help their child reach their highest and best potential.

Thank you again Chair Brenner, ranking member Fedor, and members of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee. We are available to answer questions as needed.