



EDUCATION
COMMITTEE

Witness Form

Today's Date MARCH 7, 2017

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Organization Representing: ELYRIA CITY SCHOOLS

Testifying on Bill Number: SB 34

Testimony: Verbal Written Both

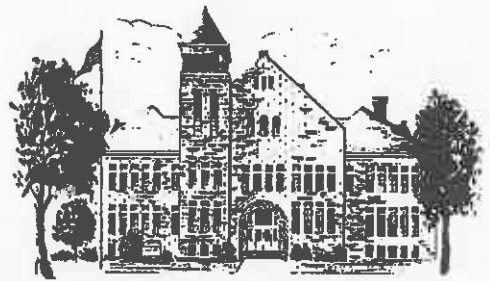
Testifying As: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Are you a Registered Lobbyist? Yes No

Special Requests: _____

The Elyria City School District

Ensuring that each child reaches his or her full potential



March 8, 2017

Senate Bill 34

Proponent Testimony - Gary Taylor

Chairwoman Lehner, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 34, legislation that would require Ohio schools to begin instruction following Labor Day with some exclusions.

My name is Gary Taylor and I am the Human Resources Director for the Elyria City Schools in Elyria, Ohio. The Elyria City Schools services over 6,200 students and employs 780 staff members including both teachers and support staff.

The Elyria Schools recently revised it's previously established 2017-2018 school calendar that had student instruction beginning August 17, 2017 to September 5, 2017, or the day following the labor day holiday. The decision to reevaluate the calendar was predicated on several factors but primarily was driven by the high temperatures and humidity that exist throughout much of August and even into September. This has been an ongoing concern as we've seen the school year begin much earlier over the past several years due to student testing and preparation. Currently most of the buildings in the Elyria School District are not equipped with modern up-to-date HVAC systems and our classroom environment during this time can be oppressive, unsafe and not conducive to effective learning. Our primary concern and objective for this revision, which was supported and achieved through a joint effort of the administration, staff, and parents was for the safety and well-being of our students as well as staff that are expected to provide meaningful and effective instruction.

Other factors that drove this action included, continued feedback from parents concerned over the increasing early start of the school year, student summer employment, and vacation time. Additionally and in Lorain County, the summer fair is always scheduled in mid-august, and precludes a late august start to the school year.

While there cannot be any guarantees with the weather, and all new school buildings in Elyria with modern HVAC systems will enhance the learning environment and the safety of students and staff alike, we believe this legislation is important to that objective.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to discuss this with you today.