State Representatives Rick Carfagna and Mike Duffey
Joint-Sponsor Testimony - House Bill 170
May 9, 2017

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Slaby, Ranking Member Fedor and members of the House Education and Career Readiness Committee. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to provide joint-sponsor testimony on House Bill 170.

As we began the 132nd General Assembly, our House Speaker Cliff Rosenberger and caucus leadership launched the Buckeye Pathway program, which serves as a roadmap for our caucus' policy initiatives. Under the numerous priorities related to education, the Buckeye Pathway called for increased student access to non-traditional subjects, such as information technologies and software coding, whether inside or outside of the classroom, in order to provide them with enhanced opportunities in the ever- changing economy. HB 170 seeks to do just that.

This bill is an opportunity for the legislature to empower our local districts towards ensuring that Ohio's students are ready for the challenges of the modern world. As we all know, science and technology are subjects that are more important now than ever, and their applications can be felt across nearly every sector of our economy. This bill will bring computer science to the forefront, and will begin the discussion as to how to prepare our future generations to be leaders in science and technology.

Over the past few years, states have been trending toward K-12 computer science standards – with Washington, Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Massachusetts and New Jersey having already adopted such standards. House Bill 170 aims to accomplish this goal here in Ohio. Even better, the bill will afford districts the opportunity to choose whether or not to implement these standards once they are officially adopted by the State Board of Education.

To be clear: this is NOT a mandate.

House leadership and caucus staff have been engaging in discussions for over a year now with computer science leaders both statewide and nationally. Nationally, the House has been in dialogue with CS organizations such as – Code.org, the Computer Science Teachers Association, Apple, Microsoft, Project Lead The Way, UTeach CS (at University of Texas-Austin), Dell, TECH CORPS and College Board. In Ohio, the House has been in conversations with Cleveland State University's Computer Science Department and their efforts with the Cleveland Municipal

School District in their current pilot program of TEALS through Microsoft. Already, we are seeing an effort in Ohio to bring computer science to a K-12 level.

Under this bill, we are aiming to define "computer science" using both the national K-12 CS framework model definition, in addition to, the conversations we have had with the organizations previously mentioned.

Also, before or on July 1, 2018, the State Board of Education shall adopt K-12 standards for computer science. In developing the standards, the State Board will be required to work and consider recommendations from stakeholders such as teachers, higher education representatives, industry professionals, and CS organizations, both in Ohio and nationally.

Third, the bill will provide opportunities to both students and teachers. For students, H.B. 170 provides for credit flexibility for a student to use computer science as a math or science unit under the current course graduation requirements. A student could also use computer science to fulfill a technology elective. Plus, the bill allows a student to apply computer science to satisfy a math or science unit, depending on the student's need. For teachers, the bill will provide more professional development opportunities in attending PD courses any time during the calendar year relating to computer science.

Lastly, the bill includes a $2.5 million technology grant program for FY19. The program applies to all school types, with the grant's purpose to improve technology infrastructure and readiness in districts and schools. The grants under this program are to be used towards computer science programs and professional development related to those programs. Specifically, the grants awarded must also be used for one of the following:

- The delivery of online assessments, including instruction and data that support online assessment readiness;
- Wireless connectivity in school buildings;
- Network services, such as improving bandwidth capacity and filtering devices;
- The purchase of computers and equipment

Each district or school must collect data related to the program, as yet to be determined by ODE. By January 1, 2020, ODE will be required to issue a report on their findings of the grant program. When administering these grants, ODE shall consider the proposals received on a competitive basis, but under the scope of priority to districts demonstrating the highest need.

In closing, we would like to acknowledge the following organizations who have already indicated their support for HB 170:

- Code.org
- UTeach CS (University of Texas – Austin)
- Computer Science Teachers Association (National and Ohio Chapter)
- Battelle
- College Board
- Dell
- TECH CORPS

- Cleveland State University (in conjunction with Cleveland Municipal School District)
- #CS4OH
- Apple (through national tech consortium)

We have also had productive discussions with the Ohio 8 Coalition, OEA, OASBO, BASA, OSBA, and ODE on this legislation. Perhaps most importantly, we have engaged educators and school officials in our home districts on this concept and have received positive encouragement. We are presently in the process of compiling all of the assorted suggestions thus far to craft some revised verbiage. In the coming weeks, we will be providing a substitute bill that clarifies or improves a handful of areas based upon all of this stakeholder input.

Chairman Brenner and members of this committee, thank you again for allowing us to provide testimony and at this time, we are happy to answer any questions.