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3rd House District

Sponsor Testimony for HCR 11
Education and Career Readiness Committee
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Chairman Brenner, Vice-Chair Slaby, Ranking Member Fedor and Members of the House Education and Career Readiness Committee thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak to House Concurrent Resolution 11, regarding Ohio's approval of the Every Student Succeeds Act (also known as ESSA).

On December 2, 2015, Congress approved the Every Student Succeeds Act to replace the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.¹

On September 17, 2017 the Ohio Department of Education submitted their Consolidated State Plan to the U.S. Department of Education.

On September 20, 2017 the House favorably passed House Bill 235 (85-9). As you may recall, this legislation updates current law and provides the General Assembly an avenue to disapprove the State Plan.

Today, I present to you my House companion legislation, H.C.R. 11. This resolution is intended to be the final sign-off of the Consolidated State Plan by the General Assembly.

¹ S. 1177, 114th Cong. 2015. *Congress.gov*. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/1177>

H.C.R. 11 lays out the process by which the ESSA state plan took place, in addition to giving the final approval of the state plan in concurrence with H.B. 235.

A letter by the U.S. Department of Education was sent to ODE on December 19, 2017 (attached to testimony) laying out initial feedback of the plan which included clarifying or additional information needed in order for compliance.

I will highlight a few of the 24 total concerns brought forth by the U.S. DOE:

- For a number of the items, U.S. DOE determined that Ohio's submitted state plan might not meet the federal statutory requirements due to lack of information or data provided;
- *Academic Achievement Indicator* – U.S. DOE determined for the 'Gap Closing' component that it is unclear how "ODE will calculate and incorporate each of these measures" (p.5)
- *School Quality or Student Success Indicators* – U.S. DOE determined that the 'Prepared for Success' measure is "not clear whether...it is measuring the preparation of all students or only of graduates" (p.6)
- *Support for School Personnel* – U.S. DOE determined for the McKinley-Vento component, which deals primarily with homeless students, "ODE does not describe programs for school personnel to heighten the awareness of school personnel of the specific needs of *runaway and homeless* children and youth." (p.10)

There remains to be some ambiguity as to the long-term goals Ohio's ESSA submitted plan. Hence, the importance of this resolution.

While the federal government has been examining the plan, there have also been third-party organizations reviewing state plans such as

The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, CheckStatePlans.org, and Collaborative for Student Success.² For Ohio specifically, Fordham and Check State Plans have given the state favorable marks.

Fordham rated Ohio's plan as being 'Strong' in two categories and 'Medium' in one category.

1. Assigns to schools annual ratings that are clear and intuitive. (Strong – due to A-F annual ratings)
2. Encourages schools to focus on all students, not just low performers (Medium – due to performance index and growth components of the annual ratings, which makes up 36%)
3. Measures all schools fairly, including those with high rates of poverty (Strong – due to academic growth making up 50% of schools' annual ratings)³

CheckStatePlans.org listed out the strengths and weaknesses of Ohio's plan, but also went into detail on the different components of the plan.⁴ Lastly, the website, the74million.org has a page dedicated to ESSA state plans, which includes links to articles from each state and their plans.⁵

Ultimately, we are elected by our constituents and as their representatives, we should have a say when policies are created that affect our educational system. ESSA is not an issue to take lightly as we all know whatever is implemented will have a tremendous impact statewide and locally in our school districts.

² An Independent Review of ESSA State Plans. *Bellwether Education Partners*. 2017 December. https://bellwethereducation.org/sites/default/files/Bellwether_ESSAReview_ExecSumm_1217_Final.pdf

³ Rating the Ratings: An Analysis of the 51 ESSA Accountability Plans. *The Thomas B. Fordham Institute*. 2017 November. <http://bit.ly/2jB0Vus>

⁴ Ohio. *Check State Plans*. 2017. <https://checkstateplans.org/states/ohio/>

⁵ Every Student Succeeds Act: 50 State Roll Call. *The 74 Million*. 2017. <http://essa.the74million.org/>

Finally, I want to thank Chairman Brenner and Representative Cupp for their input on helping to make this legislation as effective and strong as possible.

I would be happy to answer any questions of the committee.