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**Ohio General Assembly**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Columbus**

House Concurrent Resolution 28 - Written Sponsor Testimony  
December 11, 2018

Chair Blessing, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Clyde, and members of the Government Accountability and Oversight Committee, thank you for the opportunity to write to you today regarding some of the most important people in our professional lives, our legislative staff. House Concurrent Resolution 28 is the result of a belief that Representative Smith and I share: that all of our legislative staff are severely undercompensated for the commitment to our districts, their dedication to our constituents, and their direct aide to their members. HCR 28 would encourage the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate to increase the compensation of legislative staff who make less than \$50,000 a year by 20% and to increase the compensation of those who make more than \$50,000 by 10%. Representative Smith and I share the view that this is a small price to pay for effective, efficient, and dedicated legislative staff who stay in public service longer.

It is common knowledge that the legislative staff are the engines behind our offices, ensuring that our time is effectively managed, our constituents get the best customer service, and that the legislative process continues. To accomplish all of this it is common for staff to work far in excess of forty hours a week, even during slow periods. In compensation for their devotion to the cause of public service they are rewarded with a salary that is historically low even when adjusted for inflation. Because of the level of their compensation, their length of service to the House or Senate is often less than a year, too short for them to even receive the vision or dental benefits they are entitled to. As a result, there are often disruptions in customer service and legislative work as new legislative staff are constantly brought on and brought up to speed.

However, the issue of staff compensation represents a much more serious problem to the institutions of the Ohio House and Senate than just staff turnover. Often, our aides serve as a repository for institutional knowledge that is often lost to members due to term limits and

member turn over. I am sure that every member in the House or Senate has leaned on the advice and experience of their aides too many times to count during their service to the State. But given the rate of staff turnover, it is often the case that this knowledge is lost relatively quickly and the General Assembly is certainly the less for it.

Often our staff have to deal with the very best and the very worst that being in the public service has to offer, all with little thanks. It is a small kindness in my mind to increase their compensation to represent that fact. The General Assembly as it sits today could not function without these dedicated Ohioans and the state and its citizens would certainly be the less without them. More importantly, I believe that these raises would ensure that we retain the best employees that we can longer so that we can better serve our constituents and our State.

As anyone who has run a business knows, good employees are hard to find. We here in the general assembly are often blessed to have excellent employees as our staff. Representative Smith and I both believe that that legislative staff should be paid to reflect those facts. The benefits that the General Assembly and the people of Ohio stand to gain as a result are immeasurable but certainly palpable. Chair Blessing, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Clyde, and members of the Government Accountability and Oversight Committee, thank you for this opportunity to write in support of our staff. I would ask this committee to stand with me today, and every day, in support of our staff and the good they bring into this State.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Dever", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Representative Jonathan Dever  
Ohio House District 28