Chairwoman Lehner, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify as a proponent for Senate Bill 241. My name is Randy Brunk and I am serving in my 15th year as Head of School at Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy. CHCA is in its 29th year of providing high quality and Christian education to students in the greater Cincinnati area. We currently enroll 1,375 students from Early Childhood through 12th grade on four campuses. Three campuses are located in northeastern Cincinnati just outside the I-275 corridor and one campus located in the heart of the Cincinnati’s urban core. 100% of our graduates are accepted into a college of their choice upon graduation.

Thank you for allowing me to share some brief comments regard SB 241. I believe my story and that of CHCA indicates well the importance of this legislation for ISACS schools. As a real estate developer out of college, I learned the importance of providing and maintaining quality facilities in sustaining high occupancy in our buildings. While many developers were focused on volume, we were focused on customer experience and as a result enjoyed the highest occupancy rates in the city of Fort Collins, Colorado.

During that time, I became increasingly enamored with the process of education while teaching in local public schools though Junior Achievement. So much so that I eventually decided to dive head first into a career in education. After receiving my graduate credentials, I started teaching high school students and soon migrated to administration. Though I miss the classroom, I have enjoyed leveraging my background to provide competent independent school leadership.

At the very same time I entered the field of education, a group of parents in Cincinnati Ohio led by Carl and Martha Lindner, most of whom were enrolled in area independent schools, became increasingly concerned about the lack of spiritual training to go along with the high level academic training they were receiving from their current school choices. After becoming convinced that none of the current secular independent schools, nor the then current Christian school options would provide high quality in both academic and spiritual training, they started their own school. Since the beginning, CHCA has been generously supported in this mission of quality Christian education and as a result has become one of the premier Christian education institutions in the country.

In 2002, I was immediately drawn to CHCA from a school in Illinois upon seeing that quality in action. After just a short time, I summed up that value to three important factors. A clear mission, ample funding and high standards provided through our association with ISACS. Having led in two previous schools in Illinois and Virginia under another accrediting body, I saw clearly the larger impact of ISACS in supporting high quality education for students. Their accrediting standards and recurring appraisals are outstanding and we consistently adjust to best practices as a result of meaningful professional development and challenging institutional reviews. I believe our association with ISACS has yielded ample fruit as seen in our graduates fully ready for high level college success.

HB 241 allows our school and schools like ours to continue to focus on the important things:

* hiring quality teachers
* capitalizing on the latest in research based educational pedagogy
* consistently measuring and assessing the outcomes of programming
* responding to customer needs and feedback
* And, maintaining the flexibility to make adjustments based on each of these items

Students in all Ohio based ISACS schools are doing very, very well and our independence allows us to focus exclusively on the important elements that make this happen. The State’s interest in a student’s safety, ultimate success and overall wellbeing are well-served in our schools. We are ever mindful that if that ever fails to be true, our families will vote with their feet. We have many reasons to serve well the students of in our schools and ISACS is a big part of helping us achieve that objective. We trust our success will translate to a greater level of success for all Ohio students as we challenge ourselves to be exemplars of quality education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding SB 241. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.