



SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Proponent Testimony on SB 5

Tuesday, April 25, 2017

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Skindell, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on Senate Bill 5.

My name is Micah Derry and I am the State Director of Americans for Prosperity – Ohio. Americans for Prosperity is the nation’s largest free market advocacy group, with millions of activists nationwide. We exist to recruit, educate, and mobilize citizens in support of the benefits of a free society at the local, state, and federal level, helping every American live their dream – especially the least fortunate.

It is my privilege to stand here today on behalf of tens of thousands of Americans for Prosperity activists in Ohio and to that end ask for your support of SB 5, which increases the maximum state-income tax deduction allowed for contributions to a federally tax-advantaged college savings plan or disability expense account.

Americans for Prosperity is a strong proponent of giving every family in Ohio the tools they need to save for the ever-rising cost of higher education. SB 5 is an important step forward in achieving this goal. While AFP opposes targeted tax deductions or exemptions that pick winners and losers in the marketplace, deductions like the one contemplated in SB 5 are available to all and incentivize taxpayers to put more money in savings. AFP believes that incentivizing the practice of saving for college—as opposed to simply using more taxpayer dollars to directly subsidize tuition—is a better policy to help students pay for college.

SB 5 represents an opportunity for Ohio lawmakers to help families save for college, while at the same time addressing the factors that contribute to the growing price tag of a college education. For this reason, we applaud Senators Hottinger and Ecklund in their efforts to study and develop strategies to reduce the cost of attending college by establishing, through this bill, the Joint Committee on Ohio College Affordability.

Americans for Prosperity strongly supports passage of SB 5 and has marked it as a key vote on our legislative scorecard. We look forward to working with you in the future to make college more affordable for all families in Ohio.

Chairman Oelslager, members of the committee, thank you for your time, I’m happy to answer any questions you may have.