

SB1 Testimony Support/Hilt

Greetings Chair Manning, Vice Chair Bird, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the Primary and Secondary Education Committee.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of you for your service and dedication to Ohio and our citizens, particularly over this last year. I would also like to acknowledge the teachers, former state and local school board members, and former superintendent serving on this committee. Certainly, this committee is experienced and aware of the challenges of implementing sound policy.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify today and thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. My name is Bill Hilt. I am a social studies teacher with Perrysburg Public Schools. I am the founder of a non-profit organization, and a small business owner. I am testifying in my capacity as Vice-President of the Ohio Council for the Social Studies (OCSS.) OCSS advocates for a robust, rigorous, and meaningful K-12 social studies experience in Ohio's classrooms and communities.

There is little debate over the need for more in-depth financial literacy education and educational experiences that can help students gain financial independence as adults. Having an actual stand-alone semester course where all students can learn and apply financial literacy skills in an appropriate setting with the appropriate time to do it is something OCSS welcomes and considers long overdue.

Due to the amended bill language, OCSS is a proponent of this legislation.

We fully support the change regarding the validation requirement to teach the course. This version of the bill takes into account that many social studies teachers already have vast experience and training in the teaching of financial literacy.

Since 2013, financial literacy training for social studies teachers has increased significantly; and teacher candidates must demonstrate competence to receive licensure. This amendment allows for some differentiation regarding the validation and recognizes the training and experience of our social studies teachers.

Our expectation is that the professional development required for validation will provide teachers with a strong foundation for teaching the standards. It should also be noted that OCSS recognizes that professional learning and growth is ongoing for educators. By allowing those who have had more course-specific training since 2013 to be waived from the training, we are validating the work that has already been done to support teacher development around financial literacy. We believe this gives districts more flexibility to support properly credentialed teachers in this course.

OCSS strongly supports the provision of a stand-alone financial literacy course, required for graduation, and counting toward graduation for every student. By specifically reducing the current graduation elective requirement from five elective units of instruction to four and a half and adding a half credit of financial literacy, this update will intentionally keep social studies requirements and those of other disciplines in place. This ensures that all students are still taking the full required coursework that we believe is critical for graduation. This provision ensures students build important financial literacy skills without sacrificing other important

curriculum standards. Inserting this new requirement within elective courses is the proper approach.

By leaving current social studies requirements in place, with the addition of separate financial literacy requirements, Ohio students will have the opportunity to synthesize American government, world history, and important content from other disciplines in order to become more responsible citizens and consumers. Importantly, this allows for the continued growth in current best practices in social studies that includes inquiry and student contextualization and analysis of sources. These practices and real-world experiences take more time to unpack with students, not less. These skills allow students to develop the ability to make connections to our world today and communicate through civil discourse skills.

Thank you for taking the time to reflect on these changes in the amended bill and why they are important to social studies and education in Ohio. It is our hope that you will embrace these changes and pass this important legislation

Respectfully,

William Hill