Representative Mike Loychik
The Ohio House of Representatives

HB 492 – Rep. Mike Loychik, Sponsor Testimony, March 29, 2022

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Bird, Ranking Member Robinson, and Members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 492.

As Governor DeWine stated last week, mental health troubles are becoming an increasing concern and working towards improving mental health should be a key focus of our state. Mental health is just as vital to a student's wellbeing as their physical health. We have seen over the last several years just how important can be and how many athletes struggle with mental illness, such as Michael Phelps or Simone Biles. Coaches spent a great deal of time with students from practice to game days, and we think it is essential that they be able to identify mental illness and do what they can to ensure that their students get the adequate help that they need. This training will help both coaches and students alike.

This bill would simply add that coaches must complete a student mental health training course that has been certified by the Department of Mental Health as a requirement to renew their coaching permit.

We do not think that this is a silver bullet that will help solve the mental health crisis, but it is a step in the right direction and will ensure that coaches have the training needed to help identify it and know what to do should any of their students have mental health troubles.

Thank you once gain for this opportunity to provide testimony on HB 492. I would also like to thank Representative Pavliga for joint sponsoring this bill with me, and I will now turn it over to her.