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Contact Information:

Office: 614-466-8258
Email: rep30@ohiohouse.gov

**Majority Floor Leader Bill Seitz and Representative Joe Miller
The Ohio House of Representatives**

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**Sponsor Testimony for House Bill 78: Regarding State Teachers Retirement
Board elections and membership**

Chairman Young, Vice Chair King, Ranking Member Lightbody and Members of the committee, it is my pleasure to present sponsor testimony on HB 78.

This legislation addresses voting procedures within the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS). Currently, the STRS Board includes five members representing actively employed teachers, elected solely by actively employed teachers, and two retiree members, elected solely by retiree members. This in itself is interesting because currently, there are just about as many retiree members as there are active members in STRS.

That disparity is a subject for another discussion, and we are proposing a more modest step that corrects an anomaly in current law whereby a re-employed retiree (someone who was an active STRS member, then retired, and now is re-employed in an STRS-covered position) is ineligible to run for the STRS Board either as a representative of the active members or as a representative of the retired members. Effectively, these individuals are entirely disenfranchised. Our legislation simply proposes that re-employed retirants be eligible to run for election either as a representative of the active members, or as a representative of the retired members, but with the further caveat that if they are elected as a representative of the active members and cease their re-employment, they must step down at that point.

We believe this modest proposal is fair and will give a voice to the not insubstantial number of re-employed retirants working in the STRS-covered positions. In addition, we believe the voice of these older persons may provide wisdom and maturity that would improve the overall functioning of the State Teachers Retirement System.

HB 78, as introduced is supported by both Republicans and Democrats, as well as The Ohio Education Association and the Ohio Federation of Teachers.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 78, I would be happy to answer any questions that the committee may have.