

April 12, 2019

## OEA Testifies on K-12 Portion of Budget Bill

OEA Vice President Scott DiMauro testified before House Finance Subcommittee on Primary & Secondary Education on Tuesday to present OEA's views on school funding, academic distress commissions, and proposed policy changes regarding charter schools that have been offered by the Governor. The hearing was part of the deliberations on House Bill 166 that contains Governor DeWine's budget proposals.

You can read more about our positions in [OEA's testimony](#) that was given before the subcommittee.

## OEA Testifies against Academic Distress Commission language in state budget bill (HB 166)

In testimony before the House Finance Education Subcommittee on Tuesday, OEA Vice President Scott DiMauro urged that a provision in the state budget bill (House Bill 166) that would expand the use of Academic Distress Commissions in troubled school districts be removed. He said the proposal "is antithetical to local control." The co-chairs of the Subcommittee have indicated this language is likely to be removed from the bill. OEA is calling for a repeal of the state takeover law that allows for Academic Distress Commissions to be established.

## House Bill 154 (Rep. Joe Miller-D/Rep. Don Jones-R)

Also, on Tuesday, OEA President Becky Higgins presented testimony before the House Education Committee in support of legislation (House Bill 154) that would repeal the state takeover law. Also presenting the testimony with Becky were Larry Ellis, the president of the Youngstown Education Association and Jay Pickering, the president of the Lorain Education Association. Youngstown and Lorain were the first two districts to be taken over by the state.

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Becky, Larry and Jay told the committee they support House Bill 154 because it would do the following:

- **Repeal the ill-conceived law** that allows the state to takeover local school districts that are deemed to be in trouble.
- **Restore local control** to elected school boards.
- Hold school districts **accountable** by requiring school improvement teams in F-rated school buildings.

The current state takeover law provides no citizen oversight through elected school boards, no voice for classroom teachers and has been **bad for our kids**. Our experience in Youngstown and Lorain has demonstrated that the Academic Distress Commission/CEO model **does not work**. OEA believes that no more districts should be taken over, and that the districts that have been taken over should be relieved of that burden.

## House Bill 127 (Rep. Kent Smith-D/Rep. Steve Hambley-R)

The committee accepted an amendment to House Bill 127 that changed the bill from a state takeover moratorium bill to a state takeover repeal bill. OEA supported the change.

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