



**Sponsor Testimony: House Bill 8**

**Representative DJ Swearingen**

**89th House District**

**House Primary and Secondary Education Committee**

Chairman Bird, Vice-Chair Fowler-Arthur, Ranking-Member Robinson, and members of the Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 8, the Parents' Bill of Rights.

This bill does not grant parents any authority that they do not already have, but rather statutorily protects their ability to direct the upbringing, education, health care, and mental health of their minor child.

To that end, the bill protects a parent's ability to direct their child's physical and mental health. In HB 8, the school district is prohibited from keeping changes in the health of the student from their parent, and the school district is also prohibited from encouraging the student to hide these issues from their parents. There is language in the bill that addresses any concerns people might have when it comes to kids in abusive households. However, the alleged cannot be based on any religious or political beliefs of the parents.

The intent of this legislation is to have parental oversight regarding classes that are sexually explicit in their subject matter. This legislation would give the parents the ability to read over the material and, if it is their decision, to remove their kids from that class and go to another. The school will also provide a list of other classes the student is able to take in the scenario of their parents pulling them from the class.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Primary and Secondary Committee, I encourage you to support this bill as it goes through the legislative process. This is a common sense bill that simply acknowledges the fundamental role that parents play in the life of their children. It is statistically undeniable that when parents are involved in their kids' lives, kids' succeed. When Ohio kids succeed, then Ohio's future is bright. Thank you for allowing me to speak on this bill, I will answer any questions the committee may have.