



STATE SENATOR
TOM SAWYER

28TH DISTRICT

Press Release

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Senator Sawyer Calls for Review of Open Enrollment Policies for Ohio School Districts

Legislation prompted by court case involving Kelley Williams-Bolar

Columbus- State Senator Tom Sawyer (D-Akron) announced today that he is drafting legislation to call for a thorough review of Ohio's open enrollment policies in response to the case of Kelly Williams-Bolar. The Akron mother recently spent ten days in jail after being convicted on felony charges of tampering with records in order to send her children to the Copley-Fairlawn school district.

"The Kelly Williams-Bolar case has raised troubling questions about Ohio's open enrollment policy which has been going on for 22 years with little examination," said Senator Sawyer. "This is why I plan on introducing legislation soon to call for a comprehensive study of the economic, educational and social effect of open enrollment in our state, and then to modify the program as needed, or end it altogether."

The General Assembly established Ohio's open enrollment policy in 1989 to allow a student in one district to enroll in another. The current policy allows open enrollment among non-adjacent school districts on a voluntary basis. Some school districts—predominately suburban districts—do not participate in open enrollment. Consequently, a family's open enrollment options are often limited by geography, leaving some with no choice at all.

Senator Sawyer serves as the Ranking Minority Member of the Senate Education Committee.