



STATE SENATOR
TOM SAWYER

28TH DISTRICT

*****PRESS RELEASE***
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 27, 2011**

**Contact: Tanesha Walker
(614) 466-7041**

Senator Sawyer Gives Testimony on Public Records Legislation

Legislation would keep test results available to teachers

Columbus – Senator Tom Sawyer (D-Akron) today gave sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 221 in the Senate’s Education Committee. Senate Bill 221 would remove the provision that prevents achievement assessments administered in Ohio schools for grades 3 – 8 from becoming public records. The provision was added to the recently enacted state biennium budget.

“At a time where a lot of focus is being put on teacher performance and performance-based evaluations, it is important to keep these kinds of useful resources in place for teachers to better themselves,” said Senator Sawyer. “This is an opportunity for teacher’s to improve their students’ performance.”

Under prior law, at least 40 percent of the assessment questions that are used to compute student scores were public record. Any questions that could be reused on future assessments were barred from public record. Senator Sawyer’s bill would revert back to those previous standards.

“Achievement assessments are used as a measurement tool to see where the strengths and weaknesses lie in subject areas for Ohio’s children,” said Senator Sawyer. “If these assessments are not made public records, we will not be able to determine where we need to focus our improvement.”

Teachers have historically used the public questions to help prepare themselves for future assessments and to get an accurate picture on how they have prepared their students. Teachers also used the test results to create short-cycle assessments which are used for preparation as well.

The current law will be in effect for the 2011-2012 and all following school years.

