



March 1, 2023

The Honorable Mike Wilson  
Kentucky State Senator, District 32  
702 Capitol Avenue, Room 242  
Kentucky Capitol Annex Building  
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Senator Wilson:

The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence appreciates your efforts to strengthen education outcomes for Kentucky students. Your co-sponsorship of the Kentucky Read to Succeed Act in the 2022 Regular Session injected critical reforms and resources now employed in the fight against illiteracy across the Commonwealth. We appreciate your commitment to ensuring all Kentucky students are put on the path to a larger life.

A key component in ensuring success for Kentucky students is the ability of the Commonwealth to recruit and retain top talent to lead the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE). Kentucky's current model allows for the hiring of an Education Commissioner with a professional background suited for the role and permits Kentucky the ability to cast a wide net in the solicitation of quality candidates within Kentucky and throughout the nation.

The Prichard Committee is concerned that [Kentucky Senate Bill 107](#) will make it challenging to attract a competitive pool of professionals to effectively lead KDE:

- The current process, in which the Kentucky Board of Education appoints an Education Commissioner, follows a best practice model active in 16 other states.
- Only one state, Mississippi, has the Education Commissioner appointed by the state board of education and confirmed by the senate.
- Kentucky Senate confirmation of an Education Commissioner will add a redundancy to the process since members of the Kentucky Board of Education are already confirmed by the Senate.
- Requiring Senate confirmation could delay full hiring of the Education Commissioner until the legislature is in session.

Creating multiple layers for the hiring of the Education Commissioner will bring with it undue distractions and inefficiencies, distracting from the critical cause at hand: returning to a place where Kentucky's education outcomes are improving. We appreciate the opportunity to share concern with you and stand ready to assist you in growing education outcomes for Kentucky's students.

Sincerely,

Brigitte Blom  
President & CEO  
The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence