



**Broadcast
Educational
Media
Commission**

**Broadcast Educational Media Commission
Sunset Review Committee
Testimony of BEMC Executive Director Geoffrey A. Phillips
June 25, 2024**

Greetings Chair Wilkin and members of the Sunset Review Committee. My name is Geoffrey Phillips, and I am the Executive Director of the Broadcast Educational Media Commission. I am pleased to testify before you today in support of the Broadcast Educational Media Commission.

Broadcast Educational Media Commission's (BEMC) focus is to advance education and accelerate the learning of the citizens of this state through public educational broadcasting services and to serve as stewards of public educational broadcasting.

Ohio claims the first public television license in the country – WCET in Cincinnati in 1954, which led to a 1961 legislative study and subsequent action to create Ohio Educational Television Network Commission (OET) which became Ohio Educational Broadcasting Network Commission (OEB) in 1980 prior to becoming Ohio Educational Telecommunications Network Commission in 1985 (OET) and then eTech Ohio (ETC) in 2005 and in 2013 BEMC.

Through the five names and 63 years of serving Ohioans, the consistent thread has been public educational broadcasting.

Today, BEMC's commission provides leadership and support in extending the knowledge of the citizens of the state by promoting access to and use of educational broadcasting services, including educational television, radio, and radio reading services, in addition to valuable financial support to public media.

To advance our mission, the agency completed a \$3 million capital Modernization Project in 2017 which allows BEMC to serve as a Joint Master Control for the central casting of all of Ohio's public television. This is one of the most technologically advanced Joint Master Control operations in the country and is located at BEMC's headquarters on the western edge of The Ohio State University campus.

BEMC's governing board includes 11 Ohio residents who are voting members. Among the eleven are the Director of Education and Workforce and the Chancellor of Higher

Education. The Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House each appoint three members to complete the 11-member governing group.

The work of the Broadcast Educational Media Commission supports:

Eleven (11) Public Television stations (Alliance of Ohio Educational Television Stations):

- WBGU in Bowling Green
- WCET in Cincinnati
- WGTE in Toledo
- WNEO in Kent, which also operates WEAO in Youngstown
- WOSU in Columbus
- WOUB in Athens, which also operates WOUC in Cambridge
- WPTD (ThinkTV) in Dayton, which also operates WPTO in Oxford
- WVIZ in Cleveland under the corporate name of ideastream

Fifteen (15) Primary Public Radio stations (Alliance of Ohio Public Radio):

- WCBE-FM in Columbus
- WCPN-FM in Cleveland
- WCLV-FM in Cleveland
- WCSU-FM in Wilberforce
- WDPR-FM in Dayton
- WGTE-FM in Toledo
- WGUC-FM in Cincinnati
- WVXU-FM in Cincinnati
- WKSU-FM in Kent
- WOSA-FM in Columbus
- WOSU-FM in Columbus
- WOUB-AM in Athens
- WOUB-FM in Athens
- WYSO-FM in Yellow Springs
- WYSU-FM in Youngstown

Eighteen (19) Secondary Public Radio Stations (Alliance of OPR):

- WDPG-FM in Greenville
- WGLE-FM in Lima
- WGBE-FM in Bryan
- WGDE-FM in Defiance
- WMUB in Oxford
- WKRW-FM in Wooster
- WKRJ-FM in Dover/New Philadelphia
- WKSV-FM in Thompson
- WNRK-FM in Norwalk
- WOSV-FM in Mansfield
- WOSB-FM in Marion
- WOSP-FM in Portsmouth
- WOSE-FM in Coshocton
- WOSX-FM in Granville
- WOUC-FM in Cambridge
- WOUH-FM in Chillicothe
- WOUL-FM in Ironton
- WOUZ-FM in Zanesville
- WUSO-FM in Springfield

Five (5) Translators for Public Radio Stations (Alliance of OPR):

- Newark Translator (for WCBE from Columbus)
- Ashland Translator (for WKSU from Kent)
- Mansfield Translator (for WKSU from Kent)
- Coshocton Translator (for WOSU from Columbus)
- Ashtabula Translator (for WYSU from Youngstown)

Six (6) Radio Reading Services (Alliance of Ohio Radio Reading Services):

- CRRS in Cleveland
- GESMV/WORDS in Dayton
- VOICEcorps in Columbus
- WCRS in Akron
- WRRS in Cincinnati
- YRRS in Youngstown

BEMC also contributes major support to Ohio Government Telecommunications (OGT) – more commonly known as **The Ohio Channel** -- and the **Statehouse News Bureau** (SNB). Both entities are in the Ohio Revised Code under BEMC while via a Memorandum of Understanding, Ohio Public TV station ideastream in Cleveland is the managing and fiscal agent for both. The Ohio Channel and Statehouse News Bureau ensure all Ohioans learn about the actions of Ohio government from a professional, non-partisan view.

Chair Wilkin and members of the Committee, because of BEMC and Ohio public media every Ohioan has access to diverse, high-quality educational media from a variety of public sources across our great state.

Thank you for your time this afternoon. It has been my pleasure to testify before you in support of the Broadcast Educational Media Commission and we respectfully ask your favorable consideration to continue our mission. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.