

# WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

PLEASE COMPLETE THE WITNESS INFORMATION FORM BEFORE TESTIFYING

DATE: 4-17-15

NAME: TONY DUNN

ORGANIZATION: BELPRE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
(IF APPLICABLE)

POSITION/TITLE: SUPERINTENDENT

ADDRESS: 2014 ROCKLAND AVENUE

CITY: BELPRE STATE: OHIO ZIP: 45714

TELEPHONE: 740-423-9511

ARE YOU REPRESENTING: YOURSELF  ORGANIZATION

DO YOU WISH TO TESTIFY ON  
LEGISLATION (BILL NUMBER): SUB HB 64  
SPECIFIC ISSUE: \_\_\_\_\_  
SUBJECT MATTER: \_\_\_\_\_

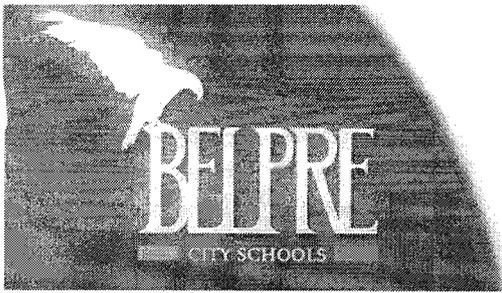
DO YOU FAVOR \_\_\_\_\_ OR OPPOSE  THE ENACTMENT OF LEGISLATION REGARDING THIS ISSUE?

PLEASE GIVE A BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE GROUNDS ON WHICH YOU FAVOR OR OPPOSE SUCH ENACTMENT:

TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX/SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA

WILL YOU HAVE A WRITTEN STATEMENT, VISUAL AIDS, OR OTHER MATERIAL TO DISTRIBUTE?  
YES  NO   
(IF YES, PLEASE PROVIDE COPIES TO THE CHAIRMAN OR SECRETARY)

HOW MUCH TIME WILL YOUR TESTIMONY REQUIRE? 5 MINUTES



# Belpre City School District

2014 Rockland Ave., Belpre, OH 45714  
(740) 423-9511 FAX (740) 423-3050

Tony Dunn, Superintendent

Missy Griffith, Treasurer

## Substitute HB 64 Testimony

Before the

House Finance and Appropriations Committee

Tony Dunn, Belpre City Schools

April 17, 2015

Chairman Smith and members of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee, my name is Tony Dunn. I am the Superintendent of Belpre City Schools, and I am here to testify on behalf of the Belpre City School District. Belpre is a member district of the Coalition for Fiscal Fairness in Ohio (CFFO).

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today. As part of the Administrative team and a representative of Belpre City School District, I would like to express our opposition to ending the tangible personal property tax reimbursements to school districts. Prior to the state's 2005 tax reform of tangible personal property and franchise business taxes, thirty (30) percent of Belpre Schools' revenue came from tangible personal property taxes.

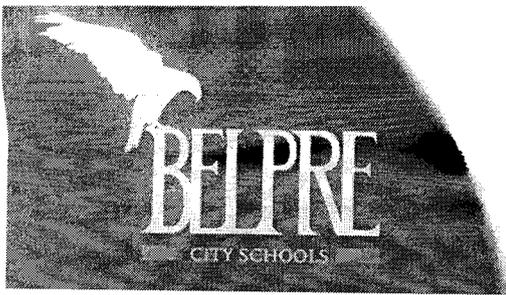
Belpre currently receives \$1,946,328 in TPP reimbursement for its fixed rate millage levies, and \$260,071 for its fixed sum (emergency) levy. Today, our TPP reimbursement is about \$800, or 29%, less per pupil than the local tangible personal property taxes provided in 2004. If this reimbursement is eliminated our district's students would each lose \$1,948 in funding. Belpre's taxpayers would need to vote to increase their tax rate by 56%, which is equivalent to \$449 for a \$100,000 house, to make up this loss. Approximately 60% of Belpre students receive free or reduced school lunches. Clearly, our schools' families struggle financially. Since 2003, the number of individuals in Belpre filing State Income Tax returns and receiving

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Mike Wile, President  
Robert Wallace, Vice President  
Fred Meredith  
Pat Taylor  
Leonard Wiggins

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the Senior Credit has increased 45.5%. There are currently more Belpre residents over the age of 65 years than there are residents 18 years or younger. With many of our elderly taxpayers on fixed incomes, I cannot get the support for a 56% tax increase, and I hope that you would not ask me to do so.

The Belpre Schools and community have always been supportive of business. We worked hand in hand with local businesses, granting tangible personal property tax abatements for improvements and updates. We want the businesses in our community, providing jobs for our community.

In the 2013 school year, Belpre City Schools spent \$9,311 per student. The elimination of TPP reimbursement will, over time, erode \$1,948 per student, bringing the amount available for the education of each student to \$7,363.

Today, Belpre City Schools faces the challenge of how to survive with the State taking the TPP reimbursement portion of its revenue. We have already stated the 56% increase Belpre citizens would see in their taxes. Businesses now paying the replacement Commercial Activity Tax would also face similar, significant increases in local property taxes to provide students with the same level of funding received in 2013.

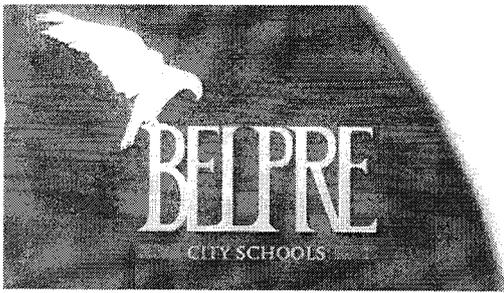
Belpre City Schools has been proactive in maintaining its fiscal stability despite continued unfunded mandates and reduced State support. As stated, Belpre City Schools spent \$9,311 per pupil in 2013, well under the state average. Since the 2007-2008 school year, our district has reduced the number of certified staff members by 24 % and our classified staff by 15% to address the lack of adequate funding to our students. In addition, our employees have accepted a 0% base wage increase three times and have made concessions on health insurance. None of these reductions even begins to address the impossible task of maintaining our outdated and inefficient facilities. Belpre students enjoy 1960s and older facilities while trying to compete in a 21<sup>st</sup> century world. Just supplying electricity for modern technology is incredibly difficult in classrooms with only two (2) electrical outlets. The Ohio

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School Facilities Commission said in 2008 that our buildings are not worthy of being renovated. A bond issue to finance a new building in Belpre could be funded 40% by the state if the citizens of Belpre would fund the other 60%. Our community might be able to afford a single new building if that ratio was reversed. Until then, we use our money wisely to fix and maintain those things we must to provide the safest environment we can.

Please leave all forms of TPP reimbursement at the current levels or return them to the levels promised when the tax was phased out.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for your time today. I am happy to address any questions you may have about our district and how we are affected by this important issue. Thank you.

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