

Hello to each of you on the committee,

As a mother of 4 private school children, I have been closely following the live stream hearings each night. Thank you for the extra hours and consideration of this very serious issue.

We reside in Akron, Ohio which continues to have an extremely poor and failing public school system. Within the Akron Public Schools, over 75% of primary and secondary schools are failing, lack extracurricular activities for students, and frequently experience extreme violence and disorder in the classroom.

However, we also blessed to have some of the **BEST** private primary and secondary schools in Ohio. We have lived in the inner city of Akron for 10 years. We have seen many kids in our neighborhood have the great opportunity of a private education due to Ed Choice. These families lives have been changed by giving their children a school community which is safe, has an abundance of extra activities and experiences, and most importantly a strong education. In addition, this scholarship has caused many of these families to be willing to remain in the city for their children to have an **EXCELLENT** education in private schools.

For 15 years, Ed Choice has been an effective approach to education. Parents are given a choice of what best meets their child's needs. Recently, I have talked to several parents and students who have applied, toured, tested, and been accepted to their potentially new private high school. The **EXCITEMENT** of these students is unbelievable! They want something different than the chaos of the public schools. They want order, discipline, passionate teachers, and activities which create memories for a lifetime. With the delay of Ed Choice, this has put thousands of families in uncertainty.

What if Ohio could be an **EXAMPLE** of an education system that works for families and their children? What if we could be the **FIRST** state in the country to approve a statewide voucher regardless of income or location? We continue to talk about the funding of the public schools. Superintendents and teachers for years have argued about lack of funding and services. They can never have enough to protect their salaries, paid time off, and pensions. Finances is not the issue for these schools. Private schools function on a fraction of their budgets with **EXCEPTIONAL** results. Education needs to change and be taken out of the control of the government. Parents are ultimately responsible for the outcome of their children's lives. These children are not the property of the government or the public school systems.

In addition, for many families, the public school system represents and pushes many liberal agendas that do not line up with morality. Families are tired of these views being forced upon their children in the classroom. **EVERY** family deserves a choice for their child's education.

I fear that some of you on committee are slanted already to backing the public schools and this has been apparent in the hearings. Each of you were elected by the citizens of Ohio to represent them not special interests. This issue of school choice is not going away. Parents want the **POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY** back to making sure their children get the best education possible.

In conclusion, I am asking for the committee to expand Ed Choice to ensure every child in Ohio is given the best opportunity for their education. This committee has a huge responsibility. You are affecting the future of **THOUSANDS** of students!

Thank you again and please know thousands of families are waiting.

Rachel Jones