

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: February 19 2020 February 19th Wednesday

Name: Jeff Dornbusch

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): Port Clinton City Schools

Position/Title: Treasurer

Address: 811 S. Jefferson Street

City: Port Clinton State: OH Zip: 43452

Best Contact Telephone: 419-732-2102 Email: jdornbusch@pccsd-k12.net

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): _____

Specific Issue: Cd Choice

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 10 minutes

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

I am NOT in favor of using public tax dollars to fund private schools all in the name of "School Choice."

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.

Board of Education

811 S. Jefferson Street
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Port Clinton High School

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Port Clinton Middle School

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Bataan Memorial

Intermediate Elementary

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Bataan Memorial

Primary Elementary

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Good afternoon, Chairman Jones and members of the Conference Committee. My name is Jeff Dornbusch and I am the treasurer of the Port Clinton City School District as well as a board member for the Benton-Carroll-Salem School District.

I am here to ask the committee to stop shifting public education dollars to private schools. I support the offer of school choice, which we already have in Ohio. Parents can send their children to their local public schools, a private school, open enroll to another public school and of course other charter schools.

What has changed drastically is who pays for these choices. Currently in my home district, we are rated one of the top 10 academic performing districts in northwest Ohio year over year. Lower income families could take a voucher to attend a private Christian school even though there is no evidence our school is failing or that the private school provides a better education. While current legislation being debated has the State paying for this, we all can certainly understand the state has only so much money. More money going to fund private education will certainly reduce the amount of money that would go towards public education.

At Port Clinton, we receive approximately \$1,700 per student in state funding even though we have a 50% free/reduced lunch rate. The Ed Choice deduction gives up to \$6,000 to the private schools. Again, we need to work with a fair playing field.

I understand the concept of "school choice" is very popular. Add to this, that a parent can send their student to a private school for "free" and you can certainly see why some parents love this program. Nothing is free. With public funding there must be accountability and transparency and certainly no discrimination.

I would ask the legislature to be very clear and have a separate appropriation for private schools. I would expect the following to go along with state funding. State audited books each year, teachers must follow the OTEs system for evaluation and ODE for licensure and the principals OPES. The fiscal agent must have a treasurer's license. Private schools must accept anyone who applies. All public record laws must now apply. Of course, state testing must be given and all scores must be made public. When we talk about choice, we cannot take the money away from the public schools without the same level of accountability. We have witnessed what has happened with our charter schools when there was a lack of accountability. The state is now in a lawsuit trying to

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recover public funds that were taken by some charter schools because of lack of oversight.

While I am in support of private religious education personally, I cannot support using tax dollars to pay for these schools. That is why they are private schools. I urge you to not create another entitlement program where parents get something for free that was never intended to be.