President Kohler and Vice President McGuire, Senator Lehner and Representative Blessing, State Superintendent DeMaria and other members of the State Board of Education, I would like to thank you for allowing me to have a few moments to speak before this fine board about the situation in Lorain.

My name is Henry Patterson and I am father of three children who attend the Lorain Schools. I have three daughters: Sydney, is a Senior at Lorain High, and is poised to graduate next week; McKenzie, is a sophomore at Lorain High; and Natalie is an eighth grader at General Johnnie Wilson Middle School in Lorain.

My wife, Debra, and I both attended Lorain Schools from Kindergarten through graduation (Admiral King class of 1993). My wife and I also grew up in poverty in Lorain during the 1980's and know first hand the challenges Lorain families face.

Because of outstanding teachers in Lorain, I had the opportunity to attend the University of Toledo, where I graduated with honors with a degree in Political Science. I then served as a Legislative Service Commission intern like Superintendent DeMaria in the late 1990s.

Following my time in Columbus, I returned to work for the Lorain City Schools as an administrator for a college preparation program. I earned my Masters Degree in Public Administration in 2005 and earned my Law Degree in 2010. I have found time to give back to the community by serving on several boards including the Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities and the Lorain County Community Action Agency Board where I have served as Board Chairman since 2016.

From March of 2013 through 2017, I served as Vice-Chairman on the Lorain Academic Distress Commission. This was by far the most skilled and dedicated boards that I have ever served on!

I would like to give you a glimpse into what I believed a functioning ADC looks like because we never truly had a chance to share our experience. Our ADC was fully engaged in what did with an eye oversight and a commitment to change! However, we realized that Lorain did not

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get in its situation overnight and it was not realistic to expect lasting change to occur in the timeframes established by the ADC law.

Nonetheless, we would receive reams of data to review in advance of our monthly meetings; individual members toured buildings, met with staff and reviewed data rooms which were put into place. Our meetings averaged three and a half hours with reliable and active attendance of members, presentations that were substantive and difficult questions asked during open meetings and in executive sessions.

Importantly, there was a true partnership between Lorain and the State Department of Education. The ODE had a minimum of two representative in attendance at every meeting; there were weekly conference calls with the ODE regarding progress and concerns; ODE assessment teams came twice per year to tell us our strengths and weaknesses, measure our progress and help with the plan that we put in place. Finally, our ADC had had two monitors who were loyal to us and were able to tell us what was actually going on in the buildings without it being sugar coated by the Superintendent or administrative staff.

There was also a cooperative environment between the Lorain School Board and ADC. There was a reality that the ADC could be an asset and champion for change if both boards worked together. We realized that the school board were the representatives of the community and we were the appointed board; to ignore the community in our decision making would be foolish and unproductive. Moreover, the entire board had regular communication with Lorain School Board and even conducted several joint meetings. As an example of the level of cooperation the , the hiring of Lorain's last Superintendent was a joint effort between the ADC and Lorain School Board. Overall, things appeared to be going into the right direction by almost every measure.

However, that all changed with the passage and adoption of HB 70. To say that our ADC was blindsided by this decision would be an understatement. We were led to believe that this legislation would only impact Youngstown; sadly, it did not. If that wasn't enough, there was a

considerable void in leadership following Dr. Ross's retirement and the several changes in state assessment testing did not help matters.

Once we realized that we couldn't meet the timelines established to turnaround the District before the new law took hold, our ADC and the School board asked that the CEO be installed in January of 2017 so that it wouldn't result in a wasted year. We knew that the transition would be a challenge and that hiring a CEO in July for a school year that started in August was pure lunacy. Unfortunately, the revised Code is the revised Code. What's more, is once the CEO was installed, there was no thought of transition between the old model and the new!

What has ensued over the past two years is more a function of HB 70 being a poorly drafted law and dysfunctional leadership than anything else. Couple this with the fact that the ODE has essentially abandoned the Lorain City Schools, there is a disengaged ADC that meets 4 times per year who have failed to fulfill their only real function of evaluating the CEO and a School Board and CEO that are both intransigent while Lorain students continue to struggle. Meanwhile, the citizens and students of Lorain are left to wonder what the hell is going on as they have no say in anything while they are things continue to decline from where there appeared to be some hope and growth.

I truly pray that this board, the Ohio General Assembly and the Governor work together to fix this model for district's in distress! I believe in oversight and found value in an ADC but I can tell you first hand that this current disengaged, top down, non-accountable model does not work! The lack of local input/oversight has resulted in a model where there is no accountability of anyone and frustration abouds. In my opinion, the job is too big for one CEO and the community is left to pay the tab without any accountability. In closing, I am not here to tell you what the answer is but I can tell you that this current model is not working! Moreover, our students and families, many of whom are already struggling economically, continue to be held hostage by a bad law and poor leadership! Please help us get this fixed!