Thank you, Chairman Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, and members of the State and Local Government Committee for the opportunity to address you regarding an issue of importance in my school district.

My name is Chris Clark and I am the Superintendent of Black River Local Schools. I am here on behalf of the 1243 enrolled students and their families in the district. We are located at the crossroads of Medina, Lorain and Ashland Counties. Our school buildings, in Ashland County, are merely 1000 yards from the Medina County Line. In fact, over 40% of our students reside in Medina County.

I am here to give support to House Bill 134.

The Black River Local Schools have been able to utilize funds secured by the Medina County Community Improvement Board to purchase school busses, curriculum series and materials, and computer technology. This has certainly helped in solving some of the financial issues within our district. These funds have amounted to approximately $259,000.00.

However, we are restricted in using our Improvement Board funds. Since our buildings do not sit within the Medina County line, we are unable use any of these funds for permanent or capital improvements that our district desperately needs to address. Currently, our district has no permanent improvement levy in operation.

Some of these permanent or capital improvements include upgrading a heating and cooling system in our high school. The current system was developed in 1959. Other improvements include upgrading and repairing parking lots and upgrading a 57 year old drinking water and sewer system. Additionally, we are faced with repairing a 20 year-old building that was damaged from a tornado. The effects of that tornado are now being observed on the structural components of the building.

Having the opportunity to utilize these funds should help take some burden off of our current district budget.

Support of this bill does **not** result in an increase in taxes received by the district from the current Community Improvement Board. It will merely allow us more flexibility with those funds, providing an opportunity to make repairs without going back to our taxpayers.

The Black River Local School District supports this bill. We look forward to the flexibility it could bring to our district and other districts that may be in our situation without impacting taxpayers.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.