

Dear Senator Schuring:

I am writing on behalf of the Kent City School District in *support of Senate Bill 248*, which has a Senate hearing scheduled tomorrow. This bill would delay the requirement for school districts to install storm shelters for new building construction, alteration, repair, or maintenance. Without legislative action, this storm shelter requirement will go into effect on September 15, 2020, and districts will have to account for millions of extra dollars in building construction costs to install storm shelters.

Last month, voters in the Kent City School District approved a "No New Tax" Bond Issue for school facility improvements. Our passage rate for ballots received by April 28 was 76.4%. This bond issue will not raise taxes for our community since old bonds issued over 20 years ago are expiring. The new bond issue will allow us to make improvements to all six district buildings to:

- improve safety and security in all of our schools,
- improve the instructional environment, and
- improve performing arts and athletic facilities.

We are very fortunate that our community recognizes and supports excellence in education, as well as the need to make these updates to our facilities. However, a requirement to budget for additional costs to construct storm shelters at each school building is truly onerous and will have a detrimental impact on our school district's finances.

I respectfully urge your support of Senate Bill 248 for the following reasons:

- Districts have already suffered a state funding cut and are expecting more. We cannot afford another unfunded mandate when resources are already scarce and could be better utilized and prioritized to meet the immediate needs of students.
- The storm shelter requirements are costly, overly burdensome and unreasonable as they relate to the risks they are meant to mitigate.
- Ohio's investment in educating students and student safety would be better made elsewhere.
- Neighboring states, like Indiana and Michigan, do not have such a requirement.

Thank you for serving as Chairman of the Senate General Government & Agency Review Standing Committee, and for your support of Ohio's public school districts.

Sincerely yours,

Deborah A. Krutz

Treasurer/CFO

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