



Eric Gordon
Chief Executive Officer

Cleveland Metropolitan School District
Senate General Government & Agency Review Committee
Sub. HB 76 – Opponent Testimony
December 16, 2020

Chief Executive Officer
Eric S. Gordon

Board of Education

Anne E. Bingham
Board Chair

Robert M. Heard, Sr.
Vice Chair

Louise P. Dempsey, Esq.

Jasmine Fryer

Denise W. Link

Willetta A. Milam

Shalettha T. Mitchell

Justin L. Monday, Esq.

Lisa Thomas, Ph.D.

Ex Officio Members

Ronald M. Berkman, Ph.D.

Alex Johnson, Ph.D.

Chairman Schuring, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member O'Brien and members of the Senate General Government & Agency Review Committee, my name is Eric Gordon, Chief Executive Office for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD). I appreciate the opportunity to submit written testimony in regards to Substitute House Bill 76.

I am sharing our opposition to Sub HB 76 which would modify ballot language for property tax levies, making it easier to miscalculate the tax liability for individual taxpayers. Property taxes are levied at the "taxable" or "assessed" value of the property which is 35% of the fair market value. Mandating the use of a "fair market" or "appraised value" may overstate the annual taxes of a levy on a ballot, and could lead to widespread confusion among voters.

The use of \$100,000 of fair market or appraised value exceeds the median price of \$47,450 of a home in the City of Cleveland according to the Cleveland Plain Dealer (January 10, 2020) and therefore is not even applicable to much of the District.

Recent amendments to the legislation provide for the use of the "estimated" effective tax rate in place of the voted rate for a renewal levy. No testimony has been provided by Auditors or other experts as to the feasibility of the calculation relying upon a number of estimates.

Property taxes represent 30.3% of CMSD's total revenue collection in our General Fund. CMSD serves nearly 39,000 students and we are committed to ensuring that every child in Cleveland attends a high-quality school and that every neighborhood has a multitude of great schools from which families can choose. To reach this goal, we have undergone reforms to address the challenges facing the district and are proud to say we've generated positive results. However, the long-term survival of our pledge to the community requires the right policy solutions which is why I am weighing in on this legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am available for any questions or additional information.

Sincerely,
Eric S. Gordon

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. S. Gordon'.

Educator: Chief Executive Office