

**Testimony on HB110 (Appropriations for FY 2022-23 Budget)  
Submitted to the Ohio Senate Finance Committee,  
May 14, 2021**

by Daniel Heim, Twinsburg, OH 44087

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to give testimony on school funding. This is a tremendous moment for each of you to leave a lasting legacy: fulfilling the long-overdue obligation to fund Ohio's public schools properly. I am writing to urge you to pass, implement and fully fund the Fair School Funding Plan in HB110.

I am a 13-year veteran teacher here in Ohio and have spent 12 of those years working in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District. I have always admired how willing our community members are to maintain one of the highest municipal property tax burdens in this state, largely in support of the schools. Even though they have been forced into such an unfair position by our state government -- time and time again -- this community believes in the value of our schools and has proven it at the ballot box, far more than the onerous State Report Card or other utilitarian metrics would have it believe.

And yet, we are now at a breaking point. Nearly 25 years since the first DeRolph finding, we are still waiting to realize a mandate that public school funding across Ohio be made constitutionally fair. Bluntly speaking, the General Assembly has spent a quarter century in de facto contempt of the State Supreme Court. Kicking this can down the road for more than a generation alongside the vast and continuous expansion of Ohio's voucher deductions has now resulted in bitter battles within our community and many others, as well as the theft of resources and opportunities for students.

The matter is urgent for the 90% of Ohio's children who attend public schools. The House has already acted in a bipartisan manner to solve this complex problem their predecessors did not. By doing so, they have recognized the rule of judicial law and sought to do right by all people in Ohio, especially our most vulnerable citizens. The ball is now in your court: Will the Senate also find the means and willpower to abide by the rule of law when it comes to educating all children equitably and investing in the future of our state?

Please pass the HB110 unchanged in the new budget. Thank you for your time.