

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: March 23, 2023

Name: Avonn Booker

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): Chesapeake High School

Position/Title: Student

Address: 10181 County Road 1

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Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB 33

Specific Issue: Fair School Funding

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 2-3 minutes

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

Fair school funding as it relates to students from southern Ohio and Appalachia.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.

Testimony Before the House Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education

Avonn Booker, Student

Chesapeake High School

March 23, 2023

Chairwoman Richardson, Ranking Member Isaacsohn, and members of the House Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education, I appreciate the opportunity to speak before your committee.

My name is Avonn Booker and I am a sophomore from Chesapeake High School speaking to you today as an interested party on the Fair School Funding Plan.

I would like to talk about the Fair School Funding Plan and its potential to provide more of a level playing field in regard to physical fitness classes, extracurricular activities, and sports. I know the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about school funding is academics, but I know for many of my friends gym, extracurriculars, and sports are what make them want to attend school.

I moved to Chesapeake during middle school and the school I came from had a lot more access to sports and equipment. I like learning, but many of my friends only want to be at school because of sports. We live in an area where kids are vaping and often exposed to drugs, and sports help keep students busy and away from drugs. If a student is in the weight room or at practice, then that is less time on a video game, lessens their chance of doing drugs, or getting into trouble.

When visiting other schools and communities outside of our county, I am amazed at their facilities and equipment. There are huge community centers, pools, lacrosse, hockey, outdoor fields stretching on and on, and several schools even have turf on their baseball fields.

We raise money through donations, car washes, spaghetti dinners, and rummage sales for basic equipment and uniforms. We don't have the extras, we work to have just enough.

For example, last year our purple and white Panther football team had to wear red helmets, borrowed from another district, in order to play. Our players were made fun of and embarrassed, but kept working hard. Our volleyball team raised money for their own jerseys and the Athletic Boosters, teams, and community members had to chip in for us to have access to our game film and stats platform.

Without Fair School Funding, many of our programs won't be able to continue. When adding up fees for officials, transportation, coaches, and equipment, many of our sports lose money each year. Families can't afford to attend sporting events because for a family of four, it is \$20 a game. If a team plays two or three nights a week, many families have to divide up and one parent attend each game because they can't afford for the whole family to watch.

If poorer, public schools, like ours, have more funding, then there is the potential that athletic departments can continue to provide student athletes with programs that motivate them to try hard and give their best effort on the field and in the classroom. There is also the potential that coaches can focus on the athletes and the games instead of worrying about fundraising.

Chairwoman Richardson, Ranking Member Isaacsohn, and members of the House Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education. I believe Fair School Funding should be fully implemented and we appreciate the efforts being made to try to give all students in Ohio equal opportunities. Thank you!