

Champion Local School District

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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House Ways and Means Committee HB 1 - Opponent Testimony

Champion Local School District, Trumbull County
Laurena Rouan, Treasurer

March 27, 2023

Chair Roemer, Vice Chair Merrin, Ranking Member Troy, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony on House Bill (HB) 1.

My name is Laurena Rouan and I serve as the treasurer for the Champion Local Schools in Trumbull County. The Champion Local Schools is a small district located in Northern Trumbull County with an enrollment of 1425 K-12. Located 50 miles southeast of Cleveland and 25 miles northwest of Youngstown. This community had an original economic base from agriculture and steel manufacturing, both of which are no longer valid. The median income in our district is \$36,396, and the average district income is \$53,368.00. Our district is comprised mainly of blue-collar employees that hold great pride and support for the school and community.

Champion Local School District opposes HB 1 because it results in a significant tax increase for residential and agricultural taxpayers, as well as a loss in local tax revenue for schools and local governments. According to the Fiscal Note from the Legislative Service Commission (LSC), the following changes will occur from a statewide perspective as a result of HB 1:

- \$929 million annual *tax increase* for residential and agricultural property taxpayers;
- \$157 million annual *tax decrease* for business and commercial property taxpayers; and
- \$538 million annual *decrease in local tax revenues* for schools and local governments.

In conjunction with Trumbull County reappraisal/triennial updates, property values in Champion Local School District will decrease 10% under HB 1 which

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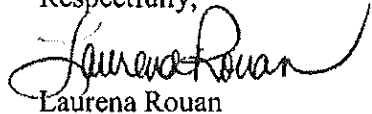
is realized in tax year 2023. This impact will carry forward into subsequent tax years. Our district currently has two fixed sum levies, HB 1 will directly impact the amount of local tax payers to meet the fixed sum amounts thereby increasing property taxes. This would have a profound affect on not only local revenue but also community support. Modeling the impact of HB1 on the district's current five-year forecast resulted in the district's revenue decreasing by \$1,716,576 over the next four years ending in FY2027.

Our community is very proud of the collaboration between our township and schools along with the many community sponsored programs offered to senior citizens and parents/grandparents of our student body. We have overcome many hardships as the economic based deteriorated in Northeast Ohio. The impact of HB 1 is an unfair result to the local members of the community who stayed here to rebuild. Our district has received numerous awards over the years including: Hall of Fame Awards OAESA; Forbes designation as "Best Bang for Your Buck", Best High Schools US News; and the Ohio Department of Education ranking of "Excellence with Distinction".

I am very proud of the hard work and excellence that administrators, teachers and staff in our district has achieved. We are on the road to even better days, HB 1 would demand very difficult financial decisions and negatively impact the programs we offer to our students and significantly affect the pocket books of our blue-collar community.

Chair Roemer and members of the committee, thank you for your time and attention. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

Respectfully,



Laurena Rouan
Treasurer Champion Schools