

To Chairman Brennan:

My name is Katherine Petrey. I am as a resident of and advocate for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights (CHUH) city school district and public schools generally, and I am writing in opposition to Senate Bill 1.

My grown son and daughter are proud graduates of the CHUH public schools, which prepared them for success in higher education and in their respective professions. I volunteered with the CHUH PTA and lay finance committee. I also spent much of my legal career representing Ohio boards of education on finance matters, where I have observed the inevitable cuts in educational offerings throughout Ohio that result from inadequate state funding.

I am opposed to my tax dollars being used to pay for student tuition at charter schools or private schools that are not subject to oversight by an elected board of education. I am particularly offended by my tax dollars going to subpar charter schools or to any parochial school that is single sex or that does not provide all students preparation for and equal access to a full pre-college curriculum.

Ohio's diversion of public funds away from public schools weakens our public education system while benefitting privately operated schools, many of whom have poor achievement records. Without a well-funded and vibrant public education system and a well-educated citizenry, Ohio will not attract or keep new industry and jobs, and it will continue to lag other states in household income.