

Testimony of Kelly Kammann

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I am here today to urge you to pass a state budget with fair school funding included. I suspect most of the people here today are familiar with the history of school funding in Ohio and the Cupp Patterson bill so I won't take any time restating the need for Ohio to have a constitutionally legal, and sustainable, and fair school funding system. We already know the wealthy contribute more to the state school budget in the form of state income and sales taxes and that's fine and how it should be. But there comes a point at which the pursuit of economic equality becomes exploitative and I just wanted to give you all a few data points about how out of balance things are with school funding and how the Intel project is going to make that issue even worse for school districts like OLSD unless the state decides to fully fund fair school funding.

- I agree that affluent school systems should get less in state funding, but it is not only wrong, it is insulting to tax payers that some public school systems like OLSD get less in state funding than private schools. That is a gross inequity that needs to be addressed.
- According to the Tax Research Council, if you exclude the west coast and New England, Delaware county already stands out as one of the highest property tax counties.
- The average family that owns a home in Olentangy Local School District is already paying around 4-6% of their after tax annual income on just the OLSD portion of their property taxes. That is comparable to a car payment every month on a new car.
- Currently in Ohio we have many school systems receiving 20 times more per pupil than other public school systems, and some even receiving nearly 50 times per pupil what some other districts get. This isn't fairness and equity, it is exploitation.
- Even under the current fair funding formula where some schools receive 20-50 times the per pupil funding of others, growing districts like OLSD will see even further declining per pupil contributions from the state in coming years that will again cause us to get even less funding per pupil than private schools. The state has made a decision to pursue a strategic investment into Intel and spending billions to grow our regional infrastructure. But the problem is that none of that money is going towards addressing the negative financial impact the Intel project will have on growing public school districts in the region like OLSD.
- Affluent school systems that will already be asked to shoulder the burden of lots of new students, schools, and bond levies generated by the impact of Intel on the region, will also be given the added burden of declining per pupil funding caused by the current school funding system.
- I am asking for the state of Ohio to recognize the inequality in the current school funding system, and the additional financial burden the Intel project will create on growing school districts like OLSD, and provide fair funding for public schools in the state budget.