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May 26, 2023

Dear Chairman Dolan,

I would like to make the following statement concerning Sub. H.B. 33, and a Witness Form is attached.

I am a long-time taxpayer, resident of Ohio, graduate of its schools, and parent of three. The government of the state of Ohio is charged with ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens, and I believe that funding education is an essential component of the welfare of our children and essential to the future prosperity of the state of Ohio.

While it might not have been the approach I would have taken, I applaud the legislature's efforts to find a workable school funding plan. The Fair School Funding Plan was developed by a working group whose members spent three years calculating the real costs of reasonable class size for students from Kindergarten through twelfth grade and the state investment required for a full curriculum, along with programs for children with special needs, English language learners, and students living in poverty. A lot of work went into developing this plan, and yet only the first two of six years have been funded – please give this plan a chance to succeed.

I have two requests:

(1) All of the hard work of Republican legislators to craft this plan can only be justified if the legislature follows through with its funding and implementation. Please adopt the Fair School Funding Plan and fully fund the ongoing phase-in of the plan using the Fair School Funding formula adopted in the Ohio House Budget.

(2) Fully funding the plan also requires basing financial decisions on the most current data, and I ask you to use the most recent cost data from 2022 to establish the funding levels that school districts should be guaranteed. Schools do not get to pay their bills at 2018 rates, and therefore it makes the most sense to set the funding levels based on the actual costs in 2022.

Falling short on either of these lets down our children, who have no voice of their own in this legislature.

Sincerely,

Chris Jacobs  
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