

Chair Fowler Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson, and Members of the House Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Raeal Moore. I am a small business owner in Columbus, Ohio. I have spent the last two decades working with educators across the state, conducting research that identifies evidence-based practices that improve learning for children in Ohio.

I am writing in support of including the 3rd phase of the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan in the state budget. I strongly oppose Governor DeWine's proposed budget, which diverts critical public-school funding toward voucher programs, charter schools, and religious institutions. This policy shift threatens Ohio's public education system, undermines economic stability, and places a financial burden on taxpayers.

Public schools serve over 1.6 million students and provide essential services beyond classroom instruction, including special education, transportation, and nutritional programs. Budget cuts will force local districts to compensate by increasing property taxes, levying new school bonds, or cutting essential services—costs that will fall on taxpayers.

Ohio has already seen the dangers of funding poorly regulated charter schools, most notably the Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT) scandal, where taxpayers lost nearly \$80 million due to mismanagement and fraud. Redirecting more taxpayer money to charter schools is fiscally irresponsible and threatens Ohio's financial stability.

Instead of shifting funds away from public schools, we should be investing in policies that strengthen them. Public dollars should be used for public education, benefiting all Ohioans rather than subsidizing selective, privately operated institutions.

I ask you to consider my testimony and choose to support 90% of Ohio students who attend public schools. Please include the 3rd phase of the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan in the state budget.

Thank you for your time and consideration.