

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 Michele Clarke. I am a mother of three children who attend public schools in Ohio. I'm here to urge the committee to include the 3rd phase of the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan in the state budget.

We recently moved here from a state that valued education and we are disheartened that our children may receive a less than adequate education in Ohio as a result of funding vouchers. About 90% of children in this state attend public schools, the education of the vast majority of children in this state should not be sacrificed to pay for the small amount that attend private schools. My children attend public schools in Loveland, Ohio. Our schools will be decimated if these budget cuts happen. We have wonderful teachers and administrators and we would like to continue to see them, as well as all students in the state of Ohio, succeed. They all deserve to have a comprehensive education and adequate funding. There are few things more important than educating our youth and ensuring that this generation of children are prepared with knowledge as they grow up and become our future teachers, doctors, lawyers, politicians, etc. We cannot prepare them for this future if we defund public schools. It would be a massive disservice to the majority of children and families in the state of Ohio. Please protect our schools.

I ask you to consider my testimony and choose to support the 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 again for the opportunity to testify.

Michele Clarke