

Testimony of Amy Scholl

Budget Inclusion of Fair School Funding Plan

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony to the Committee. My name is Amy Scholl. I am a lifelong Ohioan, a graduate of Northeastern High School in Clark County, a graduate of Miami University, a graduate of the University of Cincinnati College of Law, a licensed attorney for nearly 25 years, and most importantly, the very proud mom of four young men who are excelling in the Loveland City School District. I am strongly urging the committee to include the third phase of the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan in the state budget.

Ohio now ranks 45th out of 50 states in its per student funding. This is abysmal. Ohio has a heritage of strong public education--from kindergarten through higher education--and our record of innovation and leadership exemplifies this--from astronauts and Presidents, to leading companies headquartered here, like Procter & Gamble and Kroger. Ohio has been a great place to attend school, to start a business, to recruit employees, to buy a home, and to raise a family. But we risk having that slip away if the State does not properly fund our public schools, where 1.7 million students are eager to learn and lead Ohio into the future.

My sons are teenagers--all in high school or about to enter high school--and they have excitedly just completed their course scheduling for next school year. Looming large, of course, is planning for their futures, including whether Loveland will be able to continue to provide necessary courses and challenge them such that they are ready to compete and excel in college. As a parent, I am deeply concerned about Loveland's ability to offer important courses and opportunities if the General Assembly does not fully implement the Fair School Funding Plan. For Loveland specifically, failing to implement the Plan would cause funding to be reduced by 5% in fiscal year 2026 and 10% in 2027. This would be a \$2.5 million decrease for these two years and will be a **catastrophic loss** if the guarantee is eliminated over the next four years. Additionally, this would leave the local community--including so many retired citizens--to make up the difference in funding. This is not fair to our retirees and is simply not feasible, as evidenced by many failed levies Loveland experienced over the last decade. Loveland City Schools is a top performer (top 3% of the State), and the district already spends less per student than 55% of the districts in Ohio. But we must have sufficient funding from the State to continue this level of excellence and develop Ohio's next generation of productive, innovative citizens.

I urge you to continue to support the 90% of Ohio students who attend public schools, and to fund the fundamental right to an adequately-funded education. This is critical to my

family, to the Loveland community, and to the future of Ohio. Please include the third phase of the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan in the State budget.

Thank you,

Amy Scholl
Loveland, Ohio