

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 Amelia Allendorf. I am an Ohio resident and mother of three children. One who has successfully graduated from Ohio public schools and two who are currently attending public schools in Ohio. I believe in public education and that our children are our most valuable resource. I'm here to strongly urge the committee to include the 3rd phase of the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan in the state budget.

One of the many reasons you should do this is, for example, the class sizes in our school district. Class sizes are consistently above the national averages. When my son was in 8th grade, one class that he was in had a class size of 32 students. The national average for middle school classes at that time was 16.1 students. That is far above average and is completely unacceptable. Having above average class sizes is not something to brag about. If we do not act in the best interest of our students, these numbers will not improve.

Ohio ranks 45th lowest in what we provide per pupil for public education. We are already in the bottom 10% dropping from 35th place only twenty years ago to 45th. This is quite frankly embarrassing and not something to be proud of for any of the citizens of Ohio. We can start to turn this around and improve the numbers for our state by taking action today.

I have three requests for you all today. First, protect the guarantee for Loveland and like districts. The current plan calls for a 5% cut of the guarantee in fiscal 2026 and a 10% cut in fiscal 2027. That would mean a \$2.5 Million cut in state funding to Loveland School District alone through fiscal 2029. Our Loveland residents are already paying more than their fair share (61%) and requiring them to fill yet another gap is completely unacceptable. My second request is to fully fund Phase 3. That includes updating the inputs of the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan in the state budget. My third request is to increase the State Minimum Share from 10% to 20% so that we can improve the balance between local and state funding. Help us fund our Ohio public schools.

This decision is not about what is best for you and I as individuals. It is much larger than that. This decision is about what is best for our state as a whole. Please join me in showing your support to the future of Ohio children, Ohio teachers, and the success of the state of Ohio as a whole.

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.

I leave you today with a quote from Marian Wright Edelman:

“The question is not whether we can afford to invest in every child; it is whether we can afford not to.”

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.