

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Mary Kulakoski-Hoerr. I am a mother, social worker, lifelong Ohioan, and former Ohio public school student. I'm here to urge the committee to continue phasing the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan into Ohio's budget.

Voucher programs have not been shown to improve educational outcomes. What they been shown to do is siphon off money from the public good of public education and redistribute it to private schools. The primary beneficiaries of this are wealthy families, at the expense of lower income families. <https://www.epi.org/blog/state-and-local-experience-proves-school-vouchers-are-a-failed-policy-that-must-be-opposed-as-voucher-expansion-bills-gain-momentum-look-to-public-school-advocates-for-guidance/>

I raised my children in the Milford school district. I have watched this district reach out to the community again and again over the years with levy requests in order to do things like replace the crumbling middle school building or provide basic bus service. I have watched my community frequently say no, as the community is financially exhausted. Neither the school system nor the community should be put in this contentious position.

Properly funded public schools are good for students and for the community. They raise property values and make Ohio a more attractive state for people to live and work in. They are good for our future workforce, for our future taxpayers. Voucher programs endanger and compromise public school funding, with no demonstrable net benefit. It is a waste of taxpayer money.

I ask you to consider my testimony and choose to support the 90% of Ohio students who attend public schools. Please continue phasing the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan into Ohio's budget. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.