

Testimony in Opposition to the Proposed 2026-2027 State Budget

Introduction

Honorable Members of the Ohio House Education Committee,

I am here today to express my strong opposition to the proposed 2026-2027 state budget, which includes significant cuts to the funding of our public schools. As a concerned citizen and advocate for quality education, I am compelled to highlight the detrimental impact such cuts would have on our students, educators, and communities across Ohio.

The Importance of Public Schools

Public schools are the cornerstone of our education system and serve as the primary educational institutions for 90% of Ohio's students. These schools play a critical role in providing equitable access to quality education, fostering a diverse learning environment, and preparing our children for future success. It is imperative that we continue to invest in our public schools to ensure that every child in Ohio has the opportunity to thrive.

The Necessity of the Fair School Funding Plan (FSFP)

The Fair School Funding Plan is a vital component in achieving this goal. The FSFP is designed to address the unique needs of Ohio's diverse communities, including small towns, large suburbs, big cities, and rural areas. By considering these differences, the FSFP ensures that all students, regardless of their geographic location, have access to well-paid professional educators, cutting-edge technology, up-to-date curriculum, and life-enriching extracurricular activities.

The Consequences of Budget Cuts

Without the Fair School Funding Plan, our school districts will continue to over-rely on property taxes, which places communities with low property values at a severe disadvantage. This reliance exacerbates educational inequities and undermines the quality of education for students in underfunded districts. Cutting funding for public schools will only deepen these disparities, leading to larger class sizes, outdated resources, and reduced opportunities for our children.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I urge the Ohio House Education Committee to reconsider the proposed budget cuts to public school funding. The future of our state depends on the education and development of our children. By supporting the Fair School Funding Plan, we can ensure that all students in Ohio receive the high-quality education they deserve, regardless of their socioeconomic status or location. Let us invest in our public schools and provide our children with the tools they need to succeed.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Laurie Beth Sweeney