

Alex Fish

HB 96 Testimony

4 March 2025

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Please accept this testimony as written-only.

Good afternoon, Madame Chair Fowler Arthur, Mr. Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson, et al on the Ohio House Education Committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify via writing.

My name is Alex Fish, and I am 21 years old and I have lived in Mentor, Ohio (25 mi NE of Cleveland, in Lake County) since 2007, originally from Metro Detroit, MI. My dad, Gareth, has been residing in the district of Chair Arthur Fowler since 2021.

I am deeply concerned about the diversion of funds totaling \$103 million away from public schools to charter/private schools or vouchers for them.

Did you know that 90% of American and Ohio students attend public schools?

It is critical for students, parents, teachers, and their public schools not to have their funding cut. For public schools with a high poverty rate, they would be more likely to be in jeopardy than schools with a low poverty rate. Additionally, students and their families who are

low income or less fortunate, those people would be negatively affected and have their programs cut as well. Lastly, last week (2/24-28) was Celebrate Public Education week!

Moreover, it should be illegal to cut or divert funds for public education away. Just because there is an increase in people leaving traditional schooling since Covid-19 pandemic, it is still *not* an acceptable reason to divert funds away from public education.

Personally, my own school district, Mentor Exempted Village School District, is no exception to the funding cuts. While the percentage lost each fiscal year is less than .1%, it still isn't an exception to the bigger picture.

I hope you will consider my testimony.

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