

Written Testimony
Ohio House Bill 96
House Education Committee
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Brian Carlson
Resident, Anderson Township, OH

Chair Fowler Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Education Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony. My name is Brian Carlson, and I am a resident of Anderson Township. I moved here recently to be close to family, and even chose to live in a community with a higher tax rate because so much of the taxes support the local public school. I am happy to support the public schools, not just for my niece and nephew who are enrolled, but also for all the students in our community because I know that **strong school systems create a strong community**. I am submitting testimony to urge the committee to fully fund Ohio's public schools in the budget bill.

Suburban school districts like my home district of Forest Hills already receive less funding per pupil than other Ohio Schools while achieving at the top of all "best of" school lists. According to the Ohio Department of Education CUPP report, the average funding per pupil in the state is \$7,443.12. The cost per pupil received in our district is only \$3,607.91. Our community is made up primarily of middle-class families who are already over-extended. We do not have the capacity to pass further levies to make up the difference should our state funding decrease even further.

One of the main reasons our community was able to pass our most recent levy is because our district proudly spends less per pupil with greater achievement than our peers in similar districts (Forest Hills at \$14,700.91 vs state average of \$16,310.87). But the hit our district would take without the Fair School funding plan would be devastating.

My asks for this committee are:

- Protect the guarantee for Forest Hills and similar districts
- Fully implement the Fair School Funding Plan, including the phase-in, and update the inputs
- Increase the state share minimum from 10% to 20% to ensure that public education remains a shared state and local responsibility.

I ask you to consider my testimony and choose to support the 90% of Ohio students who attend public schools. Communities like ours cannot afford to make up the difference.

Brian Carlson