

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 Jacqueline Peck. I am a retired public school educator with 26 years of teaching experience in urban and suburban public schools in Northeast Ohio. I have personally participated in the rigorous preparation of public school teachers, including how to best support students who have learning disabilities.

Today I am writing in opposition to Governor Dewine's proposed budget that seeks a \$103 million cut in public school funding and an increase in funding for vouchers of \$265 million. Through fiscal year 2027 this represents an 11.1% decrease in state funding for public schools vis à vis a 16.5% increase in tax-supported vouchers. This proposed budget significantly widens the disparate spending on education in Ohio.

Nearly 90% of Ohio's students attend public schools. Further, students with learning disabilities need public schools because that is where they are taught by teachers with the knowledge and experience to support their learning. Yet the proposed budget clearly increases support for private schools at the expense of public schools. Clearly, this favors use of tax dollars to support the few at the expense of the many. I ask that you focus state resources on these students.

One way to ensure fair outcomes is to fully fund the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan. I urge the committee to uphold Ohio's commitment to the students who attend public schools by doing so. Thank you again for this opportunity to testify.