



Dear Committee Members,

March 3, 2025

Garfield Heights ranks among the top 10 in Ohio for property tax rates, despite being one of the state's poorest school districts. We are a "City of Homes" a bedroom community with very little industry to help with education funding. Because of this issue reducing or eliminating the 20-mil floor would have devastating effects on our district.

A circuit-breaker approach, such as homestead/occupancy credit, would be a crucial relief for residents on fixed incomes who are struggling with rising property valuations. However! A possible solution might be to lower the percentage of assessed value on which residents are taxed. Currently, homeowners in Garfield Heights are taxed on 35% of their home's value. Reducing this to between 28% and 30% could ease the tax burden while still providing a manageable increase, potentially making property taxes more affordable. This approach could maintain or even increase school funding.

Over the past 20 years, our district has experienced rapid economic changes due to factors like the Great Recession. Our community faces unique taxation challenges and increasing financial constraints pressures, underscoring the importance of the Fair School Funding Formula for the future of our schools. Our attempts to pass on renewal operating levies have been unsuccessful in the last two elections. I believe it was because of the anticipated rise in property taxes.

Have A Blessed Day!

Kindest Regards,

Matt Burke
Mayor
City of Garfield Heights
Ohio
www.Garfieldhts.org
[\(216\) 475-4388](tel:2164754388)

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: March 3, 2025

Name: Mayor Matthew A Burke

Are you representing: Yourself ☐ Organization ☒

Organization (If Applicable): The City Of Garfield Hts. Ohio

Position/Title: Mayor

Address: 5407 Turney Rd

City: Garfield Hts State: Oh Zip: 44125

Best Contact Telephone: 216-475-4388 Email: mburke@garfieldhts.org

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes ☒ No ☐

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): House Bill 96

Specific Issue: Fair School Funding Plan

Are you testifying as a: Proponent ☐ Opponent ☐ Interested Party ☒

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes ☒ No ☐

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 5 minutes

Please provide a brief statement on your position: See Attached

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.