

Testimony on House Bill 96 to the Ohio House Finance committee

March 11th, 2025

Chairman Stewart, Vice Chair Dovilla, HD-71 Member Dean, and members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Amy Bailey, and I'm a current School Board Member for the Yellow Springs Exempted Village School District in Greene County. I'm writing to you today with concerns regarding the proposed reductions in state funding and their detrimental impact on our schools, our students, and our community.

As a small but high-achieving district, Yellow Springs Exempted Village Schools have long prioritized academic excellence, student well-being, and innovative learning opportunities. However, reductions in state funding threaten our ability to maintain the high standards that our families and community expect and deserve. These cuts will directly impact essential programs, staffing levels, and student services—ultimately weakening the quality of education for every child in our district.

State funding is particularly crucial for districts like ours, where local resources are limited. If this bill is enacted as written, our community will be forced to make difficult decisions, potentially increasing the local tax burden, yet again, on residents or scaling back critical educational programs. Neither of these outcomes serves our students, our families, or the long-term economic health of our region.

Additionally, in this time of great uncertainty, teachers should not have to worry about budget cuts and how their students will receive the resources they need to succeed. Public education is a shared responsibility between the state and local communities. We cannot afford for the state to shift its financial responsibility onto our taxpayers while simultaneously expanding costly voucher programs. The balance of public education funding in Ohio must be restored before we reach a breaking point.

As a registered Republican, I urge this committee to reconsider these proposed reductions and ensure that Ohio's commitment to equitable and adequate school funding remains steadfast. Investing in education is investing in the future of our state, workforce, and communities.

I appreciate your time and consideration and respectfully ask for your support in prioritizing the needs of Ohio's students.

Amy Bailey
School Board Member
Yellow Springs Exempted Village School District