

## Testimony of

Ryan Stechschulte, Treasurer / Chief Financial Officer  
Chris Varwig, VP, Board of Education  
Toledo Public Schools  
Before the Ohio House Ways & Means Committee  
Regarding House Bill 335  
June 18, 2025

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### **Ryan Stechschulte, Treasurer / Chief Financial Officer**

Chairman Roemer, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Troy, and members of the Ohio House Ways & Means Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to House Bill 335. I am Ryan Stechschulte, Treasurer / Chief Financial Officer of Toledo Public Schools (TPS)—a large, urban district serving more than 20,000 students in Northwest Ohio.

At TPS, we are committed to making student-centered decisions that ensure every child receives the education and support they need to succeed in school and in life. House Bill 335 threatens our ability to do just that

If House Bill 335 passes, our district will lose \$12 million in funding in FY 27 and \$6 million in FY 26, requiring us to make significant cuts immediately. These cuts would include:

- The closure of schools, and
- The reduction of 60 positions in FY 26 and 120 positions in FY 27, including teachers, support personnel, and safety staff.
- Reductions in student services, intervention programs, and extracurriculars
- Elimination of staff critical to student safety and achievement

These are not abstract numbers—these are real schools, real classrooms, and real people in our community.

The bill's ban on new emergency and substitute levies would also prevent us from renewing our current emergency levy. Instead, we would be forced to place a 5–6 mill new money levy on the ballot in 2027, which would require a 60% supermajority to pass. If that levy fails, we would face an additional \$15 million in cuts, deepening the crisis.

Voters in Toledo and across Ohio have consistently supported their schools through levies. HB 335 would override these voter-approved decisions, grant county budget commissions unchecked authority to override local funding choices, and ban the very tools districts use to plan responsibly for the future.

This bill strips away local control, introduces fiscal volatility mid-contract and mid-budget cycle, and puts our most vulnerable students at the greatest risk.

We respectfully urge you to:

- Reject HB 335 in its current form;
- Preserve constitutionally guaranteed revenue sources like inside millage;
- Protect the authority of voters to renew levies they already approved;
- Collaborate with education, business, and community leaders on a balanced approach that modernizes Ohio's tax system without dismantling the foundation of public education

Toledo Public Schools is committed to fiscal responsibility, academic achievement, and equitable opportunity for every student. HB 335 would reverse years of progress, destabilize our schools, and harm the communities we serve.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 335 and instead take the time to develop a collaborative solution that provides meaningful tax relief while protecting the future of Ohio's children.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ryan Stechschulte  
Treasurer / Chief Financial Officer  
Toledo Public Schools

**Chris Varwig, VP, Board of Education**

Chairman Roemer, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Troy, and members of the Ohio House Ways & Means Committee:

At Toledo Public Schools, we are committed to making student-centered decisions. If House Bill 335 passes, our district will immediately lose \$6 million in funding, requiring cuts to take effect by January 1, 2026. These cuts would include the closure of at least three schools and the reduction of 60 staff positions—changes that would directly affect our students, families, and the broader community.

In the second year, the projected loss doubles to \$12 million. This would result in the closure of 5–6 school buildings and the loss of more than 120 staff members. The proposed ban on new emergency and substitute levies would also prevent us from renewing our current emergency levy. Instead, we would be forced to place a 5–6 mill new money levy on the ballot in 2027, requiring a 60% supermajority to pass. Failure to pass that levy would lead to an additional \$15 million in cuts.

As an urban district leading the region and state in developing Career Tech academies and programs, forging strong partnerships with local industries, and contributing to city and county economic development initiatives, we know that HB 335 would halt the progress we've made. It

would hinder our ability to prepare students for future careers, disrupt workforce development efforts, and discourage future economic investment in Ohio. What business would choose to invest in a state that fails to invest in its public schools and future workforce?

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 335. Take the time to collaborate with education, business, and community leaders across the state to find a balanced solution—one that provides property tax relief without jeopardizing the education and future of Ohio's students.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris Varwig  
Vice President  
Board of Education, Toledo Public Schools