

**House Ways and Means
House Bill 335**

**Princeton City School District, Hamilton, Butler and Warren Counties
Christine Cook Poetter, Treasurer**

October 15, 2025

Chair Roemer, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Troy, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on House Bill 335. My name is Christine Cook Poetter, and I serve as the Treasurer/CFO of Princeton City Schools in Hamilton, Butler and Warren Counties.

Princeton is a district that is not at the 20-mill floor. Our residential and commercial/industrial valuations are close to a 50/50 split. Our valuations and income are on the high side but our student population is almost 70% economically disadvantaged. We just passed our third levy since 2012. We only see significant revenue growth when we pass a levy for new money, so we plan carefully to extend the levy for as long as we can understanding that our expenses will continue to increase due to inflation.

HB 335 limits local revenue growth from inside millage. This impacts the students at Princeton by reducing programming that has allowed us to be a 4-star district for three years in a row. Prior to passing our May 2025 levy, we eliminated \$5.7 million in staff, building/department budgets and other cost cutting measures including a hiring freeze, staff reductions and cuts to professional development programs.

I understand the concern that rising property taxes present for our communities. Like you, I believe we need responsible, balanced solutions that provide relief to taxpayers without destabilizing schools but also do not want to jeopardize the strong programs and results we have achieved for the students at Princeton.

I respectfully urge the committee to consider alternatives that protect taxpayers while preserving the stability schools need to educate Ohio's children.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

