

**Opponent Testimony for Sub. House Bill 96**  
**Senate Education Committee**  
**05/07/2025**

**Abby Buckerfield, Parent**

Chair Andrew O. Brenner, Vice Chair Louis W. Blessing, III, and members of the Education Committee of the Ohio Senate:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Abby Buckerfield. I am a parent in Delaware City Schools. I am writing to express my deep concerns about the current state of public-school funding for our schools. I am in support of fully funding Ohio's public schools in the budget bill.

I am reaching out because I have seen firsthand how insufficient funding affects our classrooms, teachers, and students. Because the school funding formula was only implemented at 67% for FY 24, Delaware City Schools received less money from the state than the formula indicates. For Fiscal Year 2024 the amount of the formula not funded by the state for our district was over \$5 million, around \$1000 per pupil. Over the next two school years, the increase in state Foundational Aid funding is forecasted to be only about \$18.00 per pupil for the 2025-2026 school year and about \$9.00 per pupil for the 2026-2027 school year. The Sub. HB 96 eliminates the formula which takes into account the true cost to educate each student, leaving our students underfunded by more than \$4 million over the next two school years unless local taxpayers pick up the tab.

In addition to underfunding our students by more than \$4 million dollars over the next two years, Ohio legislature's attempt to limit a district's operating carry-over cash balance to only 30%, will cost Delaware City Schools \$8-\$10 million in just the 2025-26 school year. This loss of property tax revenue will have a drastically negative impact on our district—potentially sending Delaware City Schools into fiscal watch or even fiscal emergency.

I urge [Senator/Representative Last Name] to take action. Specifically, I ask you to:

- Do not decrease the state's share of our funding in the next Ohio Biennium Budget.
- Use current data to determine the actual cost to educate, not data from 2022.
- Increase the minimum state share of the base cost from 10% to 20%.
- Fully fund the Fair School Funding Plan with the changes above.
- Remove the provision restricting school cash balances to 30% or 90 days.

Delaware City Schools Schools—and public schools across Ohio—need your leadership and commitment. Our students deserve access to a well-funded, high-quality education that prepares them for success.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Abby Buckerfield

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