

Testimony for House Bill 96
Senate Education Committee
May 6, 2025
Sean Martin, Multimedia Designer

Chair Andrew Brenner, Vice Chair Bill Blessing, Ranking Member Catherine Ingram, and members of the Education committee of the Ohio Senate:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Sean Martin.

I am the parent of two elementary-aged children attending school in the Forest Hills School District (FHSD). I am a resident of Anderson Township, homeowner, public school advocate, taxpayer, and active voter.

I am providing testimony to advocate for our local public schools, and I am concerned about how this budget will affect homeowners in the Forest Hills School District. I am in support of fully funding Ohio's public schools in the budget bill and ask that you **ELIMINATE THE CAP ON CASH BALANCE, PROTECT THE GUARANTEE** for districts like FHSD, and **FULLY PHASE IN THE FAIR SCHOOL FUNDING PLAN.**

We moved to Anderson Township primarily for the schools. The top-notch education they receive in FHSD will set them up to succeed in the future as active citizens in the state of Ohio. Living here is the best gift we can give them. However, my wife and I have discussed if we can remain in this district. Over 70% of the school funding comes from homeowners like us and we are strapped. We have been able to shop around for cheaper insurance and limit our spending, but at some point, we will run out of options. The state has a more diverse pool than just homeowners, whereas our township only has the option to levy property taxes. Putting a cap on the cash balance, eliminating the guarantee, and abandoning the Fair School Funding Plan will cause our school district to ask for operating levies more often, and eventually price us out of the school district we love.

My family chose to live in this community because of the high quality schools. We know that a strong public school creates a strong community: they support our property values, our local businesses, and our future workforce.

Again, I ask you to consider families like mine when you consider the public education budget, and specifically that you eliminate the cap on cash balances, protect the guarantee, and fully fund the Fair School Funding Plan. I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony and your time.

Sean Martin

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