



Reading Community City School District

Damon Davis, Superintendent
810 E. Columbia Ave.
Reading, OH 45215

Senate Education Committee

House Bill 96 Testimony

Reading Community City School District

Mr. James Perdue, Board Member

May 14, 2025

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Honorable Committee Members for the opportunity to speak today on HB96. I am Jim Perdue and a 35-year board member at Reading Community City School District and 21-year member of the Board of Directors at Great Oaks Career Centers. Currently, for the past 50 plus years, I have worked at General Electric in Evendale Ohio. Most of this time as a supervisor or manager in Construction, Facilities, Equipment or Test Maintenance. During this time, I have worked with and around skilled trades and know how important skilled trades can be to the success of your company. I have managed trades including HVAC, Electronic Techs, Electricians, Millwrights, Mechanical Maintenance, Pipe Fitters, Sheet Metal and Painters.

During my career there have been ups and downs in hiring skilled trades and it remains an issue today. As Governor DeWine continues to work hard to bring high tech manufacturing jobs into Ohio, Governor DeWine counts on us to provide the skill sets needed to fill those positions now and in the future.

At Reading City Schools, our administrators and board of education work very hard to bring a great education and opportunities to our students. A short time ago, Reading received a \$1.9 million dollar grant from Governor DeWine to help us provide career pathways and opportunities for our students. Today our students came right out of high school with a good education that prepares them for some of the jobs in the workforce. Job opportunities were different when I graduated from Reading in 1968. With GOD, a little luck, and an MBA, I continue to work my career and plan on retiring at the end of the year.



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In closing, in HB96, there is a section about cash balances which would penalize schools for planned balance carryover. This could cause our school district to run a levy as early as next year. I fail to understand how we should go back to our voters again, when they had already voted in the millage from the last levy and have in-trusted us to use that millage for our students. Governor DeWine gave us a grant to help our students, and now we may not be able to sustain all we have worked so hard for. Please consider removing this section from HB 96! Please help us with our student's and the great state of Ohio's success.

Thank you for your time and attention!