



Good morning members of the Ohio Senate,

My name is Kathy Quintiliano, and I have the honor of serving as the President of the Midview Local Schools Board of Education. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today on behalf of our students, staff, families, and taxpayers.

I stand before you to express our strong and urgent opposition to House Bill 96 in its current form—particularly the proposed cap on school district cash carryover balances and the unprecedented authority it would grant county budget commissions to override voter-approved tax levies.

Midview Local Schools has worked tirelessly to be a model of fiscal responsibility. In fact, our last successful operating levy was in 2013—over a decade ago. Since that time, we have not returned to the ballot to ask for new operating funds. We’ve built a sustainable financial model that stretches our levy dollars through a disciplined practice of saving in the early years of a levy cycle and spending prudently across the duration.

This practice—the very same approach used by responsible households, businesses, and governments—is what House Bill 96 threatens to penalize.

A forced 30% cap on cash balances would obliterate our ability to plan for the future. It assumes that a balance over 30% is a sign of waste or hoarding. In truth, it is the opposite: it’s the foundation for long-term sustainability. For Midview, this bill would result in a projected loss of over \$19.4 million in the very first year of implementation. That number alone would immediately throw us into financial distress and potentially push us toward fiscal watch.

Let us not forget that Ohio’s public school funding system was declared unconstitutional over 25 years ago in *DeRolph v. State*. Since that time, public districts like Midview have borne the weight of an underfunded system, relying heavily on local property taxes to make ends meet. From 1997 to today, the state’s share of public school funding has declined, while mandates, expectations, and costs have only increased.

Rather than addressing the core inequities flagged in the *DeRolph* decision, House Bill 96 adds another layer of instability and removes the very flexibility districts need to navigate an already flawed system. The bill would punish districts for the exact kind of financial prudence lawmakers have long encouraged.





Let me also be clear about the compounding impact of EdChoice voucher expansion. These programs have diverted millions of public dollars into private institutions, many of which are not subject to the same transparency, accountability, or performance standards. In Midview alone, the current structure of EdChoice vouchers siphons away millions of dollars annually from our general fund—funds we cannot offset without burdening our local taxpayers.

Now, combined with the provisions of House Bill 96, this financial pressure threatens to cripple our ability to serve the students who depend on us most—students with disabilities, students facing mental health challenges, students from working-class families who rely on strong public schools to access opportunity.

Midview is not a shrinking district. Quite the opposite.

We are a rapidly growing community, with an influx of families moving into our district because of our reputation for academic excellence, student safety, and community involvement. We recently partnered with the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission to conduct a 10-year enrollment projection study. That study projects our enrollment will grow by nearly 800 additional students over the next decade.

That's not just a statistic. It represents more classrooms, more transportation needs, more staff, more technology, and more infrastructure. We do not have a Permanent Improvement levy. We maintain a 175-acre campus and a 65-year-old high school without relying on our taxpayers for more. We do this through smart, strategic use of our cash balance—a balance that HB 96 would slash, putting our growth trajectory and fiscal solvency in serious jeopardy.

I understand the desire to provide property tax relief. I share that desire. But let's be clear: this bill does not provide true relief—it simply shifts the burden. What might appear as short-term tax savings for some will turn into long-term tax increases as schools like Midview are forced back to the ballot with higher millage requests and shorter levy cycles. It destabilizes the careful trust we've rebuilt in our community after decades of public scrutiny and political missteps by prior boards.

House Bill 96 is not just a bad bill—it's a dangerous one. It's not about efficiency. It's about eroding local control, undermining voter intent, and compromising the very system we are tasked to protect.



THE MIDVIEW SCHOOLS

Where the community educates and empowers



We ask you—on behalf of thousands of students and families in our community—not to strip us of the tools that make good governance possible. Allow us to continue leading responsibly, planning strategically, and delivering the kind of public education that Ohioans deserve.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your commitment to doing what's right—not just for today, but for the future of every child in our state.

Thank you

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