

Proponent Testimony for House Bill 96
Senate Education Committee
5/14/25

Emily Lampe

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

Thank you for reading this. I wish I could be there in person, but I can't take off of work to make the trip down to Columbus. My name is Emily Lampe. I'm a resident of Cleveland Heights, in Cuyahoga County, and a mother of a 4th grader and a 2nd grader who attend Fairfax Elementary public school.

I am in support of fully funding Ohio's public schools in the budget bill. House Speaker Huffman and his co-workers' proposed budget would shortchange public schools by over \$2.75 billion dollars over the next two years without the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan. My children's school district would be shortchanged by \$6.6 million dollars over the next two years. That would mean a terrible reduction in resources and teachers for our children.

I am writing because I believe in the Fair School Funding Plan and believe it should be reinstated in the budget, and that it should be implemented using up-to-date information so that each and every public school district receives the money it needs to educate all of its students well.

I do not think money should be used for vouchers to fund private school - it's in the name, private. That means that when people choose to send their children to a private school they should be paying for it themselves, not with public funds. Money for vouchers should be removed from the proposed budget.

Private ventures should not be funded with public funds. For example there is \$600 million marked to support the building of a new football stadium that is being built by a private company (with enough worth to pay for it and that will profit massively once it is built). This is a misuse of funds which should be used for something that benefits everyone (because everyone pays taxes for public services) like public schools.

Public schools deserve to be funded so they can hire the staff needed for every school. In some years my daughters have been in classrooms with over 30 students, another year with 28. This is too many students for a teacher to fully support every day. And their teachers have been amazing. Dedicated, kind, and amazing at their jobs of growing and

educating minds. But, if you've ever been with that many children in a room, you know that it's a lot. A fully funded budget would mean money to hire additional teachers so that class sizes could be closer to 17-20 students and every child would benefit from that.

Children are the future - they are the future for those of us who are their parents or guardians but also they are the future for those of us without children. They will be in charge of the businesses, the farms, the hospitals and nursing homes as my generation grows older and needs support. We need to support public schools for all children, so that they can learn and lead successful lives with a solid foundation and we, as the state of OH can be successful.

My 4th grader and her class (our group consisted of 36 children, the principal, a fourth grade teacher, a special education teacher there to support several students who needed additional support for the trip, and 6 parent volunteers) just came down to Columbus on Monday, May 12, 2025 for a tour of the Statehouse and the Judicial building. I was able to chaperone and it was my first time coming to Columbus and seeing the historic buildings.

I was struck by the deep thoughtfulness and pride in the construction of the buildings - the statehouse using materials from Ohio (in the floors and walls of limestone we saw shells, a fish tail in the steps of a light well, the judicial building with reliefs of the resources and history of Ohio in every hallway and along the exterior. We sat in the Senate chamber and were told about how the 33 elected officials would make laws to support their constituents.

As we walked through the buildings I could not stop thinking about that Ohio pride. If what we were told on the tours is true, and the people working in Columbus really do take pride in our state and its people, then it is their sacred duty to take care of and properly support, monetary, the education of Ohio's youth. Please adjust the budget for education in OH so that the almost 90% of students who attend public schools get the good education they deserve.

Please vote yes to include the Fair School Funding Plan and make sure it is properly implemented moving forward.

Thank you,

Emily Lampe