

Good respected members of the body, administrators, and everyone present today.

My name is Laim Greaney, a junior from Belmont High School - A Dayton Public School. I come before you to discuss a serious issue that affects not only our students but also our entire community—the lack of funding for schools that can lead to loss of school transportation for our students. According to the Dayton Daily News “Dayton Public Schools, ended fiscal year 2024 with nearly \$139.2 million cash on hand, equivalent to roughly 58.2% of its budget, according to the LSC. The district would have to lower that amount by more than \$67 million under the budget proposal.”

As you may know Dayton Public Schools have been using our cities RTA bussing for a number of years. In the past month one of our High School students was shot and killed on the way to the bus hub. This has caused an outcry from regular citizens, concerned parents, lawmakers and RTA officials. Their proposal is to end the RTA bus passes for our students, further complicating an already tenuous situation.

Ladies and gentlemen, school transportation is essential for ensuring that all students have access to education, no matter where they live. For many families, the bus is the only way their children can safely and reliably get to school. Yet, due to ongoing budget cuts, we're facing the very real threat of reductions in city bussing, fewer yellow buses available, and even longer travel times for students. So when you're arguing about the lack of attendance - which is part of our district's state report card - look no further than the issue of bussing and the lack of resources to effectively transport our students safely and efficiently.

Lawmakers, when transportation is cut, the impact is immediate and far-reaching. Students may be forced to walk long distances, sometimes through unsafe areas, to get to school. Furthermore, when families can't rely on transportation, it becomes more difficult for them to attend school consistently. The result? Lower attendance rates, disruptions to learning, and students falling behind. These are things that Dayton Public Schools can not afford.

Ladies and gentlemen, transportation is not just a logistical issue - it's a fundamental part of our students' ability to learn and succeed. When we fail to invest in transportation, we are denying our children equal access to education and putting them at a disadvantage.

I urge you to prioritize funding for school transportation. Our students deserve the ability to get to school safely, on time, and ready to learn. Lawmakers, let's make sure they have that opportunity - and that starts with you.

Thank you for your attention in this matter!