

Chair Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Stacie Baker and I am member of the Reynoldsburg City Council and Chair of the Finance Committee. Since being elected in 2017 my goal has been to expand the revenue base in Reynoldsburg. After the passage of Issue 2 in 2023, allowing recreational marijuana, the city was approached by a recreational marijuana facility. Given the potential revenue this facility would generate based on the language, I was excited to explore this option.

Not only would the City benefit with the jobs for the facility, we would also stand to gain 36% of the excise tax. This money would be dedicated to supporting the Reynoldsburg Division of Police and to the park improvements throughout the City.

Given the cost of resources that may be related to a recreational marijuana facility; to be blunt, we are going to need those funds, and they shouldn't expire at all. I respectfully ask that you restore the funds approved by the voters.

I also ask that as the father of two public education students and the husband of a teacher that the Cupp-Patterson Fair Funding plan be restored. My kids, and 90% of kids in Ohio who go to public schools, deserve a funding plan that will help them achieve academic success. I know there are ways to pay for it now and in the future, you just have to find a way and the people of Ohio will support you in the long run for being the first General Assembly to bring Fair Funding to our State. Also, giving the Cleveland Browns organization \$600 Million dollars for a brand-new football stadium is a waste of taxpayer money. As a lifelong Cleveland Browns fan, I think this is a bad idea. I would rather, for these funds go towards school districts that are struggling financially due to failed school levy or school districts that have seen an increase in their student population and could use increased resources to better serve them. I think multi-billionaires like Jimmy and Dee Haslam would be just fine if they pay for a new stadium themselves.

It has been far too long we the taxpayers have been tricked into voting for ballot initiatives with the promise that the revenue generated from sources such as the Ohio casino and the State of Ohio lottery and sports betting will go towards Ohio education. But, only for those funding to go elsewhere, but towards what those funds were intended, which is to better help educate our children. It has always been said that "it takes a village to help raise a child", but now a village is no longer enough to raise a child. Instead, it takes a whole nation to raise a child due

to the increasing and complex challenges that these kids face today. So, I ask you the State Legislature to help set our children up for success and not for failure, to help lead our children towards the best path forward, to when we the adults in the room are long gone from this world, that we leave it known that our children are left in the best possible to live and succeed.

Thank you,
Stacie Baker
Reynoldsburg City Council
Chair-Finance Committee