

**Interested Party Testimony for HB 96**

**Senate Finance Committee**

**May 29, 2025**

**From: James Miller, OD (Garaway Local Schools Board Member)**

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

*As an individual board member, the following written testimony is my personal view and not an official resolution of the Board.*

My name is Dr. James Miller. The events of the past five years have led me to become involved in our local public governing bodies—eventually leading to my role on our local public school board where I am currently serving as Vice-President of the Garaway Local Schools Board of Education in Tuscarawas county.

I will keep this written testimony brief. As a Garaway parent (all four of my daughters are currently students in the district) and Board member, I am writing to express my personal opposition to the thirty percent (of annual operating expenses) carryover cap on public schools. We at Garaway have endeavored to be wise stewards of the public funds entrusted to us—a strategy which predates my time on the Board, but a strategy I wholly embrace as a sound, fiscally conservative approach. A carryover cap is unnecessarily punitive to fiscally responsibly districts, as well as being short-sighted. (One simple example: Our maintenance needs vary year-by-year, but they are substantial due to the age of our five school buildings.) I am not opposed to re-evaluating the need for structural changes to property taxes in Ohio, but this proposed carryover cap is a temporary “band-aid” that I believe will lead to unintended negative consequences in the near future.

I am more than willing to discuss this in greater detail—as I have with Senator Landis—but, again, I am attempting to be brief and to the point.

Thank you for your consideration. Feel free to contact me if you have any further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



James Miller, OD

Garaway Local Schools Board of Education Vice-President

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