

Testimony of Jeff Brown, Granville EVSD Superintendent

Chairman Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Jeff Brown and I am the superintendent of the Granville Exempted Village School District in Licking County. Joining me is Dan Dodd, the legislative agent for Granville School District, Granville Township, and the Village of Granville, who is available to answer specific questions if necessary. We would ask that you please consider adding an amendment similar to Senate Bill 173 into the budget bill.

Due to our district's proximity to the Intel megaproject, we know that significant growth is inevitable. However, with the power of cities to annex into our district and allow high density housing with no financial assistance from either the city, the developer, or the state, new development through annexation will lead our district into a financial crisis.

Recently, the City of Heath annexed land in unincorporated Union Township that lies within the borders of Granville School district. A developer plans to move forward with a 540-home development on this land where the least expensive homes will be on quarter-acre lots and sell for well over \$600,000, significantly above the average price for a home in our state and considerably higher than what is considered affordable housing.

The Granville community has absolutely no say over any of this. No one within our district votes for the mayor of Heath or its city council members. Through annexation and without accountability to the people affected by the annexation, Heath will take valued farmland out of production and take advantage of our district's reputation and excellence, using them to increase city profits while leaving our district and its residents footing the bill.

What is the cost, you might ask? Given where Granville falls in the state funding formula, the fact that we will not receive additional money for these students based on the guarantee, and the calculation of our district's property wealth, **our district will experience an operating shortfall of nearly \$9 million per year**, even after factoring in increases in property taxes and income taxes. At a time when we are trying to find property tax relief, the only option our district will have will be massive property tax increases. We simply cannot cut our way out of this deficit. This operating shortfall does not include infrastructure improvements required by Granville and Union Townships or the Village of Granville and does not include the cost of new buildings, all of which will be necessary with the influx of over 800 students we expect to receive when this project is fully complete.

Members of the committee, we need your help. We are thankful for the support of our local legislators but we need your support too. Please add an amendment similar to Senate Bill 173, jointly sponsored by Senators Schaffer and Brenner, requiring school

district lines to move with an annexation when cities annex into unincorporated areas unless the district where the property is located agrees to take the students. We understand there are times when annexation is appropriate. This is not one of those times. The Granville community is powerless to stop another community and developer from exploiting the taxpayers of our district.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions.



OVERALL LOT COUNT

RUSSELL:	373
ESTATE LOTS EAST OF CANYON:	13
FOSTER:	153