



Senate Finance Committee
Substitute House Bill 96
Molly Snodgrass, Concerned Parent in Big Walnut Local School District
June 6, 2025

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

Thank you for considering my written testimony today. My name is Molly Snodgrass and I am a parent of two children in the Big Walnut Local School District.

I also wish to thank you for the many hours you've spent respectfully listening to and reading public testimony on House Bill 96 during its recent public hearings. As you are all well aware by now, the House-passed version of the biennial budget has several items related to public education that is of significant concern among Ohioans, and which I hoped the Senate would improve upon.

While I appreciate that the 30% carryover cap for school district cash balances has been increased to 50% and includes an exception for certain capital expenses, this is still a provision where the state government is unnecessarily hampering the effective local control of school districts in managing their own financial resources. Each school district's financial situation is unique, and voters of each district approve (or reject) levies based on the specific situations within their district. **Therefore I urge you to eliminate or significantly revise the 50% cash balance provision to allow for financial management by local districts according to their district's needs.**

I also appreciate that the bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan is fully phased in, however I am disappointed to see that it still uses updated capacity (wealth) factors while using outdated input (cost) data. This results in an unintended imbalance that shifts a higher percentage of funding to local districts from the state. **I respectfully ask that the state update the base cost components in the formula, or if that is not feasible, delay the implementation of updated valuation and income data until base cost inputs can also be updated.**

Finally, several new restrictions on local levies have been added to the bill. While these might be well-intentioned, it is yet another set of limitations placed on local school districts that restrict local taxing authority. Since a disproportionate amount of school funding is still borne by local districts, **I urge the committee to reject these restrictions and maintain local authority to determine the types, timing, and purposes of school district levies.**

There may be more provisions of this bill which I will find do not support the best interests of Big Walnut and public education in general; however the bill (even the summary and comparison documents!) is long, and the night is late.

Thank you again for the opportunity to have my voice heard. I look forward to these issues being addressed, and other potential issues that may arise on further review.

Molly Snodgrass
Sunbury, Ohio