

Chairperson Sandra O'Brien, Vice Chair Theresa Gavarone, Ranking Member Kent Smith, and members of the Senate Local Government Committee-

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Lisa Flowers. I am a resident and educator in Toledo, Ohio. I am representing myself, not the district I work for, today. I strongly oppose House Bill 335.

I have been in the education sector for over 16 years and in 3 different states mostly with the most underserved students. I have been teaching in Ohio since 2013. I've been a 1st grade, 3rd grade, and 5th grade teacher as well as an academic coach to teachers. Passing this bill will likely mean a loss of millions of dollars for our local schools and communities, not only for the district my own children attend, but also to the district that I work for. The superintendent of the district that I work for has been open and honest about the cuts in funding and what that can mean for our community, specifically the impact on our students. I do not support this bill or any bill that fails to acknowledge that the state caused our property tax issues. I do not support giving billions of tax giveaways to the rich when our most vulnerable population, our children, need and deserve it more. Please find another way to fix this problem.

Being an educator is challenging. With my superintendent's permission, I invite you to my classroom for a week, a day, to get a glimpse of the challenges we face. You'll see the hungry kids coming to school for a meal and a warm place to be, you'll see the same student wearing the same outfit for the week, you'll see the students with no coat or proper shoes. You'll hear their heartache of family dynamics, unavailable parents through their own choice or because they are working more than one job, and you'll see how 10 year olds navigate the complexities of social skills in person and social media. Taking away our funding will not help any of these challenges.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote no on this devastating bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.