

Chairwoman Lehner, Vice Chair Tehar, Ranking member Fedor and members of the Senate, thank you for allowing me to share my testimony on how HB70 has impacted the families of Lorain.

My name is Barbie Washington and I am the mother of 4 kiddos and a Mama Bear to many. I have been involved in Lorain City Schools as a parent and volunteer since our eldest daughter was in 1st grade, she's now 24! Our children graduated in 2013, 2016, 2017 and our youngest is an incoming sophomore that earned 27 college credits at the end of her Sophomore year. The three graduates all earned scholarships, 2 to The Ohio State University and one to the University of Findlay, none of them had to take remedial classes. Our school district is not horrible, success is possible here, with the right amount of support, encouragement and services for our kids!

I would like to share the disaster that HB70 and ADC has created in Lorain!

Outside of academics, HB70 has divided our community and created divisions and accusations of racism where they never existed before. The person that the ADC chose to lead our district is one of the most significant forces behind the madness. The ADC itself is a ineffective mess. The Chair himself has blocked parents and our parent group on Twitter and worse, refuses to collaborate with his own commissions members. He even created a rubric for the CEO's evaluation on his own and after discussions regarding a working meeting to complete the evaluation, he completed it on his own. Hardy's contract stated the commission shall evaluate the CEO, this was supposed to occur at least twice already and has not. The ADC refuses to do the job they were appointed to do.

Parents concerns and questions go unanswered. I used to be able to pick up the phone or send an email to any administrator, including the Superintendent, and they would be sure address my concerns. We have been asking many of the same questions since October and they have either been ignored or not addressed adequately. The CEO has changed the set up of his Town Halls to limit parents from asking questions and voicing concerns. The ADC meets approximately 4 times a year and has little to no interaction with parents in between meetings. Certainly at the

last ADC meeting and others before, they will allow time to ask questions, but refuse to answer them. Hardy and his administration even refuse to provide information requested by the ADC. The CEO has been allowed to change Public Records Request policy and give a thumbs up or thumbs down to every request made. He has portrayed that he has the support of our community, when in fact he has failed to bring one parent, who does not or has not worked for the district before you to support him, the ADC HB70.

We voted and elected our local board of education. We want our voice and vote to matter. Those that make decisions for our kids, educators and district should know the challenge and obstacles specific to our district. Our elected board meets every two weeks and are accountable to the voters. They live in our community, they answer phone calls and emails and are willing to meet with parents. I have written emails to the ADC, I know others have as well, and received no response. In fact Patty O'Brien is upset that I have been emailing her, yet she never once reached out to address or at least acknowledge my concerns.

Our CEO has used powers, given to him by HB70, under the oversight of the ADC to end the Parent Advisory Council, to tell untruths, to skew data, to poorly implement new policies, use programs he's affiliated with, fire administrators, fire teachers, end programs and services such as Title 1 teachers who worked directly with children who needed one on one or small group settings, change Title 1 Literacy Nights into meetings regarding HB410, attendance issues and threats of retentions.

Senator Lehner called HB70 an American Tragedy, Paolo Demaria admitted this was flawed and the State School Board made a resolution condemning it. State oversight is not working in Lorain, Youngstown or East Cleveland. Our children have not benefited from this. We have lost students and educators due to this disaster. The state does not intimately know Lorain. The outside people from the CEO to his admins and TFA hires do not understand our kids and community. This has been an issue from day 1. There is no trust, no relationship and no understanding of the history of our community or the issues our kids and families face.

Please return local control and keep HB154, as introduced by the House in HB166!

Be Great,

Barbie Washington