



**House Education and Career Readiness Committee
 House Bill 200 Testimony
 Robert A. Hancock, CPA
 Treasurer, Hamilton City School District
 November 14, 2017**

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Slaby, Ranking Member Fedor and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to address you concerning the provisions of HB 200. My name is Robert Hancock, Treasurer for the Hamilton City School District.

I am here on behalf of the Hamilton City School District Board of Education and the 9,634 students that attend our schools to express our opposition to HB 200. The Hamilton City School District is currently on the state funding cap by \$4.47 million. How is it that the state has funds available for private school vouchers when we need over \$506 million dollars to fund the formula that is currently in place?

The source data for the table below is the November #1 Foundation Funding Report and it details the dollar amounts needed by line item in the foundation report in order to fully fund the formula.

	Calculated Funding	Actual Funding	Unfunded Due to Cap
Opportunity Grant	\$5,008,601,020	\$4,603,334,093	\$405,266,927
Targeted Assistance	938,073,520	890,734,926	47,338,594
K-3 Literacy Funding	111,495,365	101,880,353	9,615,012
Economic Disadvantaged Funding	440,102,795	407,644,368	32,458,427
Limited English Proficiency Funding	32,004,883	27,528,819	4,476,064
Gifted Education Funding	<u>80,745,076</u>	<u>73,575,797</u>	<u>7,169,279</u>
Total	<u>\$6,611,022,659</u>	<u>\$6,104,698,356</u>	<u>\$506,324,303</u>

A through and efficient system of public schools is not achieved by providing state funds to non-public schools or in this case to the parents of non-public school children. Particularly when the state cannot or will not fully fund the current school funding formula.

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Robert A. Hancock
 Treasurer

We are also gravely concerned about the ongoing lawsuit that the Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow has filed against the State of Ohio. How can the legislature consider yet another voucher program at a time when the current voucher program is embroiled in a high profile lawsuit where the Ohio Department of Education is trying to recover \$60,000,000 in public school dollars that were taken away from public school districts and that is for just one school year. We are talking about money that was taken away from public school districts and given to for profit schools. Money that should have been used to provide much needed educational programs.

	ECOT DEDUCTION	TOTAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL DEDUCTION
FY17	\$1,194,181	\$3,666,258
FY16	1,300,617	3,731,730
FY15	1,157,734	3,808,439
FY14	1,165,931	3,700,536
FY13	1,003,888	3,366,548
Total	\$5,822,351	\$18,273,511

The table above illustrates Hamilton City School District state funds that have been sent to ECOT and Community Schools as a whole over the past 5 years. Think about the educational programs we could put in place to address the vast educational needs we experience as an urban school district.

The money that we are sending to Community Schools would go a long way toward implementing a full scale preschool program for 3 and 4 year old children. This would allow us to get our student population ready for kindergarten and would be the single largest thing we could do to enhance student achievement not only in Hamilton but across the State of Ohio.

We are doing a disservice to the students in our communities by diverting scarce resources away from the public school system whether it be in the form of direct deduction from the school district's state funding or whether you implement a direct payment program to the parents of private school students. The end result is the public school system, where the vast majority of students are educated, is the one you choose to underfund.

It is time fully support the public school systems in Ohio, let's work together to provide high level educational programs to all students and we do that by ending the failed experiment of school vouchers.

Please note that we whole heartedly support a parent's right to seek a private education for their children but it is not our responsibility as taxpayers to fund that decision. I urge you to vote

against HB 200 and work hand in hand with your local boards of education to improve educational programs in our public schools which are charged with educating all students that live within their attendance boundaries.

On behalf of the Hamilton City School District Board of Education, I thank you for your time and consideration.