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My name is Scot Prebles, I am the superintendent of Forest Hills Local Schools, a suburb of Cincinnati located in Hamilton County.

I would like to provide testimony today regarding the public education funding proposal, brought before this body, known as the Fair School Funding Plan, Substitute HB 305 –most specifically I want to speak to open enrollment, community schools and voucher recommendations within the model.

However, before doing so, I must first acknowledge my deep appreciation for House Speaker Cupp and representative Patterson who have provided unwavering leadership, practitioner respect and support for the pre-kindergarten through grade 12 students of Ohio.

Additionally, I want to thank every member of the general assembly who signed on as co-sponsor during our three year journey to this

moment. Your interest in advancing future prospects for all of Ohio's school age children through a proposed funding model dedicated to providing what students really need to gain a "high quality education" in Ohio, is appreciated.

Obviously, the cost of guaranteeing that all Pre K through grade 12 Ohio children have equitable access to quality education is of great concern to all Ohioans. That is why we as members of the fair funding workgroup worked closely during the last three years with Ohio's education groups as well as state and national education experts to identify essential, cost based and justifiable proposals. I was honored to be teamed with my colleague Steve McAfee, Logan Elm Treasurer, as co-chair of the open enrollment, community schools and voucher subgroup.

We met with representatives of the state's education-oriented organizations and not-for-profits regarding Ohio's open enrollment data, and spoke with representatives of the Midwest Council of State Governments to gain regional and national community and charter perspectives. We also had conversations with representatives of the charter school movement that serve thousands of community school students across the country to compare funding methods and other operating information. We engaged several Ohio experts in school finance and taxation as well as representatives from the Department of Taxation, The Ohio Department of Education, and out of state experts. These experts and the organizations they represent each provided meaningful and helpful information that ultimately led to our Subgroup's proposals.

One of the basic tenets of substitute HB 305 is that school aged children should be funded where they are taught. The state's current funding

mechanism has proven to be unpredictable, unclear, unable to adequately serve its intended purpose and out of sync with the needs of today's school age children. I respectfully submit that with more than 500 of Ohio's 610 school districts subjected to what are known as caps or guarantees, the current funding model is totally ineffective.

Our collective work to develop a base cost to educate all students fairly was difficult to apply to community and charter schools as many are much smaller than traditional schools and utilize a variety of different organizational structures. However, during the past 12 months we coalesced around the following:

- Adapting Substitute House Bill 305's new base cost model for traditional schools to community schools
- Calculating for each community or charter school, its own per pupil DIRECT INSTRUCTIONAL costs, (this figure representing 60% of the model's base per pupil calculation) using the very same components and teacher cost data as in traditional Ohio schools - except there will be no minimums.
- Calculating for each community and charter school the same statewide average per pupil amount for the other three components of the traditional Ohio school's formula
  - Instructional and Student Supports - absent of athletic and co-curricular costs: 15% of proposed Base Cost Model
  - Building Leadership and Operations 20%
  - District Leadership and Accountability 5%

- Calculating a community and charter school total average per pupil average base cost allocation of \$6,795; \$400 shy of the model's traditional school proposal.

These suggested allocations are included in the bill's substitute version to ensure that an appropriate amount of resources needed for high quality education exists for all of the state's students. Our community and charter school partners deserve fairness, rationality and justifiable allocations in their schools just as traditional public schools.

Regardless of the location or institution, we are all obligated to provide high quality education for Ohio's school age children. Both community and public school professionals wish to eliminate the strained relationships that exist due to the way resources flow to community school students. HB 305's direct funding will add the much needed transparency, fairness, and cost based funding everyone wants

Regarding Ohio's open enrollment students, HB 305 funds students transferring through open enrollment at their location, consistent with the concept that students are to be funded at the school where they are taught, with no windfalls and no dramatic losses.

Basically, a pool of dollars/resources would be established with the following financial parameters:

- A school that loses a student to open enrollment will forfeit the difference between their base cost state share and \$7,195.
- A school that gains a student will now receive the difference between their base cost state share and the statewide new base

cost of \$7,195.

Here again, the purpose of this open enrollment clause is intended to ensure that fairness, clarity and transparency exist.

Thank you for your consideration, the honor of discussing HB 305 today and the opportunity to seek your support for HB 305 so that it may ensure that the needs of Ohio's school aged children are met.

Scot Prebles  
Superintendent