

**Proponent Testimony of
Jack Thompson, Perry Local Schools**

**Before Finance Committee of
The Ohio Senate**

June 3, 2020

Good morning Chairman Dolan, Vice-Chair Burke, Ranking member Sykes and members of the Senate Finance Committee. I am Jack Thompson, Superintendent of Perry Local School District and I would like to express my support for SB 313 and the state's power plant districts.

I am especially interested in protecting the Perry nuclear facility, because it is located in and provides crucial support for our community. Before speaking about SB 313, I would just like to take a moment and thank the members of this committee and all of our legislators for the previous work they have done to keep our plant open. In addition, we appreciate the successful efforts to reduce the future devastation the continued devaluation of a plant of this magnitude would have caused. It has been a long road and we realize the need to continue marching on.

In my official capacity as the Superintendent for Perry Local Schools, I oversee a district that educates nearly 1,700 children, handles 250 full and part-time employees and manages a district budget of more than \$22 million. Perry Local Schools will be significantly impacted and continue to be hit hard if legislation does not allow for recalculations of the state foundation to be made under ORC 3319.028. Power plant districts live and die by their power plants, and mostly it seems like the latter, as valuations statewide of plants continue to free fall. The Perry plant pays millions of dollars in state and local taxes, a critical funding support for our schools. But their goal has always been to decrease that value. They have been very successful over the years and their valuation along with the tax liability to the schools has dropped significantly.

Losing those tax revenues in large chunks is debilitating the stability schools need to realize our mission of providing excellent education to children. Not having the recourse allowed in the law for a recalculation of the district wealth to compare with other school district puts us at a disadvantage with our educational peers and provides for a disservice to our children.

Devaluations of tangible personal property at the Perry facility have already reduced district tax revenues by nearly \$3.5 million over this past three years. Legislation last year kept the plant open and kept frozen dollars public utility tangible dollars that were declining, but the devaluations greatly impacted our district revenue before that happened. The provisions of "the .028 adjustment" were not recalculated last year after the budget process and as a result, the district lost over \$1 million annually that will be gone forever unless corrected.

Adequately funding education in Ohio has been a longstanding, ongoing struggle. Reducing existing mechanisms hurts districts even more.

Please protect the invaluable tax support for our schools and Ohio that nuclear power provides by approving Senate Bill 313.

Thank you, Chairman Dolan, and members of the Senate Finance committee, for allowing me to testify on the importance of SB 313. I am happy to take any questions the committee may have.