

**Testimony Opposing House Bill 1
House Ways and Means Committee**

Submitted by: Shaker Heights Board of Education

President: Dr. Emmitt Jolly

Vice President: Lora Cover

Member: Alison Bibb-Carson

Member: Jeff Isaacs

Member: Heather Weingart

Chair Roemer, Vice Chair Merrin, Ranking Member Troy, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for affording us the opportunity to testify in opposition to House Bill 1. We are the Board of Education for Shaker Heights, OH.

This bill would create a flat state income-tax rate of 2.75%, replacing the state's current four income tax brackets with rates ranging from 2.765% to 3.99%.

This action is both deeply inequitable and will create a significant burden on our local public entities. It would be asking those that make less money to give a larger percentage of their income than our more wealthy residents. Ohioans making more than \$115,300 per year would see the largest income tax cut if the legislation passes. In fact, 89% of the value of the tax cut will go to the richest 20% of households (those making more than \$124,000 per year) and 35% will benefit the richest 1% of households (those that make more than \$617,000), which will receive an average tax cut of more than \$11,000. Meanwhile, the bottom half of Ohio households will receive nothing or very near nothing. Why would we ask less of those who are most able to contribute? It would also dramatically decrease support that would go to schools and local governments by \$1.2 billion a year, putting more pressure on local communities to increase their property taxes. Even with HB920, where property taxes would automatically increase to cover part of the downfall, it would still be \$538 million a year that would have to be made up with a heavier property tax burden already in place.

This is another example, in a long line of examples, of the Ohio legislators working to dismantle public education and we are deeply concerned about the potential impact this would have on our schools, potential businesses coming to Ohio, our families and most importantly our students.

The Shaker Heights School District stands on three pillars: **Excellence, Equity and Exploration**. We teach our students to ask questions, think critically and be reflective in order to create a more just world. We do that despite the state's insistence on a tax cut that benefits the wealthy at the expense of those most marginalized in our state. We do that despite the state looking to privatize education by expanding a voucher program that does not hold the private schools accountable as we do public schools. We do that despite the State Board of Education passing resolutions that deeply harm kids that do not conform to hetero-norms. And because we keep teaching our kids the pillars of **Excellence, Equity and Exploration** they are going to ask us, where were we when the state, using our schools as decoys for their political aims,

came for our schools? So we stand here today, in strong opposition, so that we can stand in front of our students with integrity.

We respectfully request that this committee vote no on this bill which will have a regressive effect on our least wealthy and hurt all of our citizens dependent on our public education and services.

Shaker Heights Board of Education