



To: Honorable Ted Strickland
Governor, State of Ohio

From: Tom Ash, Buckeye Association of School Administrators
Barbara Shaner, Ohio Association of School Business Officials
Fred Pausch, Ohio School Boards Association

Date: June 27, 2007

Re: **House Bill 119 Veto Requests**

Our organizations represent public school board members, superintendents and school business officials in districts throughout Ohio. We are writing to express our concern over certain issues contained in Substitute House Bill 119 as passed by the legislature. We request that you consider exercising your line-item veto authority on the following items:

1. **Special Education Vouchers** – Our organizations oppose the Special Education Voucher program proposed in HB 119. This program would serve to drain resources from the public schools and weaken the due process rights afforded to parents and students.

We believe that privatization in the name of choice jeopardizes the good of the whole. By diverting dollars for a few, the ability of public school districts to meet federal and state standards is compromised and students' educational experiences will suffer.

2. **Election Costs** – We have strong concerns with a provision added in the House under Ohio Revised Code Section 3501.17 that would permit county commissioners to pass on additional election expenditures to school districts, such as the cost of poll workers, the cost of precinct registration lists and other contractors involved in the maintenance of voting machines. No meaningful discussion has occurred regarding this issue, and we are concerned with the possible financial burden placed on school districts. We ask that you remove this provision from the bill until a more meaningful debate can happen and potential costs to school districts can be determined.
3. **Real Estate Appraisal (REA) Fees** – The Senate included a provision that would raise the fees for school districts to pay for the costs of county real estate appraisals. While we understand the issue some counties have in covering the costs for appraisals, we oppose the increase in fees for school districts. Unfortunately, the counties having difficulty covering the costs within their existing budgets are in the same area where school districts cannot afford to pay more. We will be happy to work with the legislature to find a solution for the counties in need. However, we do not support shifting more of the burden to school districts.

Thank you for your consideration of our views on these important matters. If you have questions, please feel free to contact us.