

I am writing a testimony in support of the House Education Committee COVID-19 school district default budget bill. As the chair of the Springfield School District School Board, I am concerned at the disadvantage operating with last year's budget would create for our students and district. Our districts budget was defeated on the first vote. Since that time we have developed a second operating budget to present to our community. Operating with only our 2020 budget funding would require us to not replace current open positions. The date to offer our current staff contracts has passed and we are no longer able to reduce positions. The cost increases on our school district from health insurance is now out of our direct control. A modest increase to the 2020 fiscal budget, 3-4%, or the last budget put forth to voters would normalize the 2021 school year. Our district would be at an unfair disadvantage in comparison to districts who were able to pass a budget prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. As students hopefully reenter classrooms in the fall the level of support required may be increased. Reducing the services available to returning students due to the inability to pass a budget in the new climate will have a long term effect on their education. I would like to reiterate my support for the COVID-19 school district default budget bill.

Troy Palmer

School Board Chair

Springfield School District