

In Favor of HB1381

Chairman Beard and Committee Members,

My name is Leslie Bieber, and I am the Superintendent of Alexander Public School District. I am here to testify in support of House Bill 1381, with the provision to adjust the in lieu of deduct from 75% to 50% and later amended to 65%.

At the local level, this proposed change has the potential to provide significant benefits to constituents in our district. This adjustment would allow us to redirect dollars to offset the mills previously needed from local taxpayers, reducing the financial burden on our community while still supporting essential school functions.

I have been in Alexander for 12 years now and we have experienced 183.33% growth in student enrollment. I have been in construction for all of those 12 years which also equates to our constituents funding this continual new construction. It started with teacher housing; our district owns 14 homes that we rent to staff. We renovated the existing building and expanded in 2017 which doubled the size of the existing structure. In 2019, the district built a Vo-Ag building. In 2020, we expanded our new football program from a 6-man field to a 9-man field. Alexander School did not have a football program for 27 years prior to playing 6-man football. Now, we are currently in our second major expansion of 10 classrooms and more office space which will officially triple the size of our facility.

Specifically, the reduction in property tax reliance would ease the strain on constituents funding our district's construction debt. It would create an opportunity to better manage financial resources, ensuring that the dollars generated within our district are used effectively to meet our community's growing educational and infrastructure needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective. I respectfully urge a "Do Pass" recommendation for HB 1381.