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Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to House Bill 1482. As a school administrator, I am concerned about the potential negative impact this bill could have on school districts' ability to responsibly plan and finance critical infrastructure projects through municipal bonds.

House Bill 1482 proposes changes that limit local control and could weaken the ability of local school districts to make sound financial decisions that best serve our students, staff, and communities. School bond elections are a vital tool for addressing the needs of aging facilities, expanding capacity to meet enrollment growth, and ensuring students have safe, modern learning environments. By altering the requirements for bond elections, this bill could limit districts' ability to make necessary investments in their schools.

By eliminating a special election option for the voters to weigh in on pressing issues, we can delay possible projects a significant amount of time, often driving up the cost. As an example, if this bill were law today, the next referendum opportunity after the November 2024 election would be June 2026. Furthermore, if the public decides to bond with a yes vote at a general election, it would be too late to add the levy to the next year tax bill. This project may not be able to begin for another year.

I ask for your opposition to HB 1482 and allow local decisions be made by the voters when the need is present. Preserving local administration's ability to ask voters for direction helps in planning and saves on expenses to the public.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further and advocate for policies that truly benefit all students.

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