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(Columbus) - Ohio Association for Gifted Children President Sally Roberts issued the following statement regarding Governor Strickland's proposal to resolve the education budget crisis:

"The recent Ohio Supreme Court decision regarding the implementation of video lottery terminals has created a deficit of at least \$851 million in the state's education funding over the biennium. Left unfilled, this hole will cause unprecedented cuts in local district services. The Ohio Association for Gifted Children supports Governor Strickland's proposal to delay the final year of the income tax reduction. It is a reasonable solution to this budget crisis.

While mindful of Ohio families struggling in these uncertain economic times, it is clear that without this option, Ohio schools will be forced to make devastating cuts to academic and non-academic programs, staff, transportation, and many other areas. The loss of state funds will put even greater pressure on local communities and families as they cope with the elimination of basic education services. In order to support future economic growth, Ohio cannot afford these cuts to education.

While there may be other options to raise the necessary revenue to support education funding in this biennium, Governor Strickland's proposal is currently the only viable option on the table. We call upon state legislators to set aside politics and work to ensure the future of Ohio's children."

The Ohio Association for Gifted Children advocates on behalf of more than 250,000 gifted children in Ohio.