

Michigan Parents for Schools

Working for excellent public schools—for our children and our communities

Michigan Parents for Schools

Testimony on the Fiscal 2014 School Aid Executive Budget proposal

Prepared for House Appropriations subcommittee on School Aid, 19 February 2013

Chairman Rogers and members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to share our observations on the Governor's school aid budget proposal with the Committee. On behalf of parents and concerned citizens across Michigan who support strong and vibrant local public schools, we maintain that the Governor's efforts to increase investment in public education do not go nearly far enough.

- Spending on K-12 education in Michigan has declined in absolute terms once inflation is taken into account – an 18% decline over twelve years. (Please see attached charts.)
- Even after correcting for our smaller public school enrollment, real spending per pupil has declined almost 9% over twelve years.
- This decline is not entirely caused by Michigan's "one state recession" – our state's commitment to supporting education as a percent of state personal income has declined over the last decade. In good times or bad, we are committing a smaller share of our economy to education.

We can see the impact of these choices in our relative rank on per-pupil spending, and in Michigan's scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

We applaud the Governor's decision to increase funding for early childhood education because of the tremendous impact that can have on the life chances of our children. That choice to invest in quality preschool for young children needs to be matched by a corresponding investment in K-12 education.

Instead, districts can expect to receive anywhere from \$2 to \$32 *less* per pupil next year under the Governor's proposal. Mandatory special education services must still be heavily subsidized out of the basic foundation allowance, and our promise to provide targeted aid to districts with at-risk students is still not fully funded. According to the House Fiscal Agency, future revenue increases to the School Aid Fund will be eaten up by increases in retirement obligations.

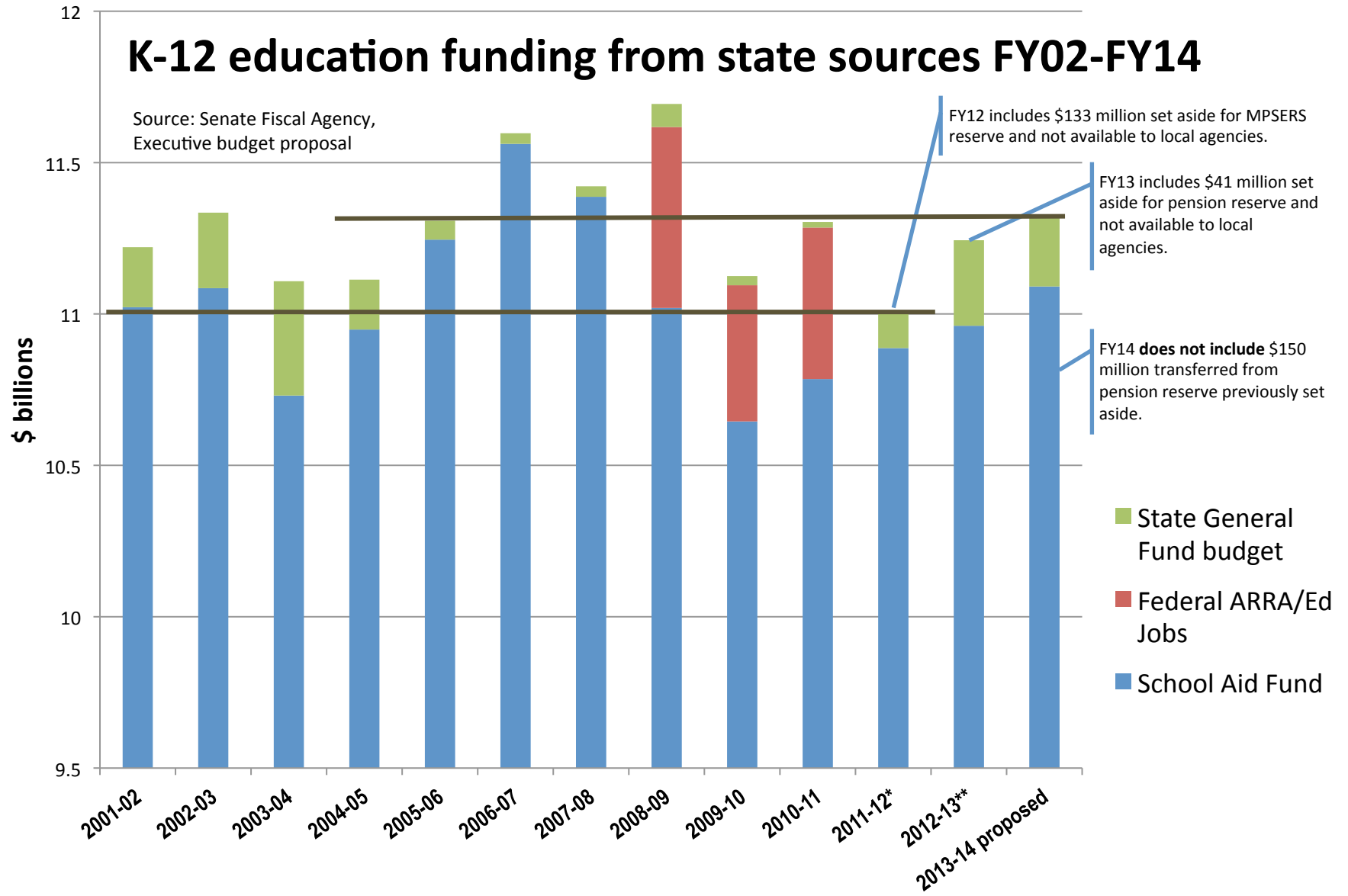
Instead of trying, year after year, to shoehorn our children's education into a resource bucket set long ago, we should be identifying what we want our schools to do for our communities and then ensuring that schools have the resources necessary to accomplish what we ask.

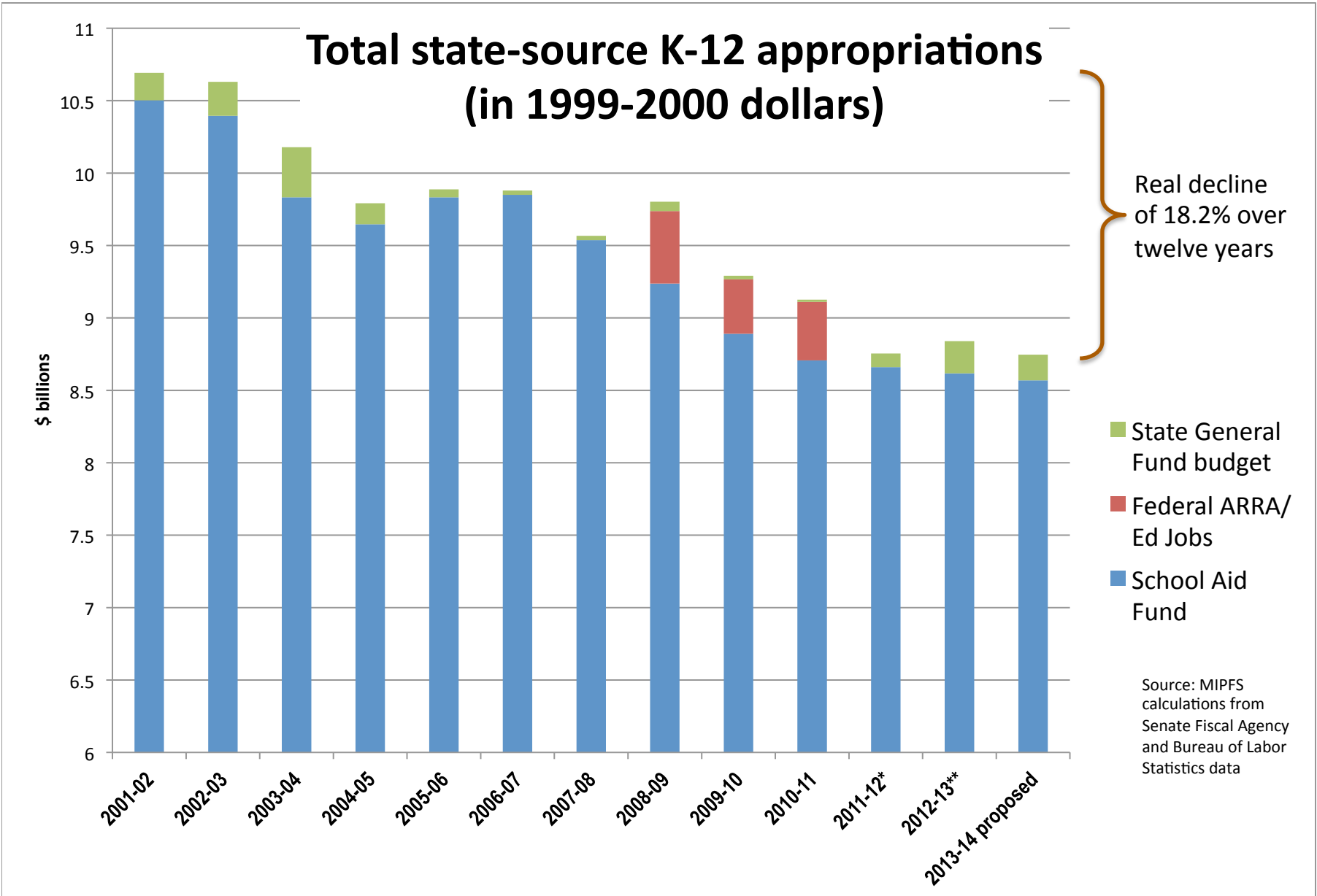
Thank you for your time.

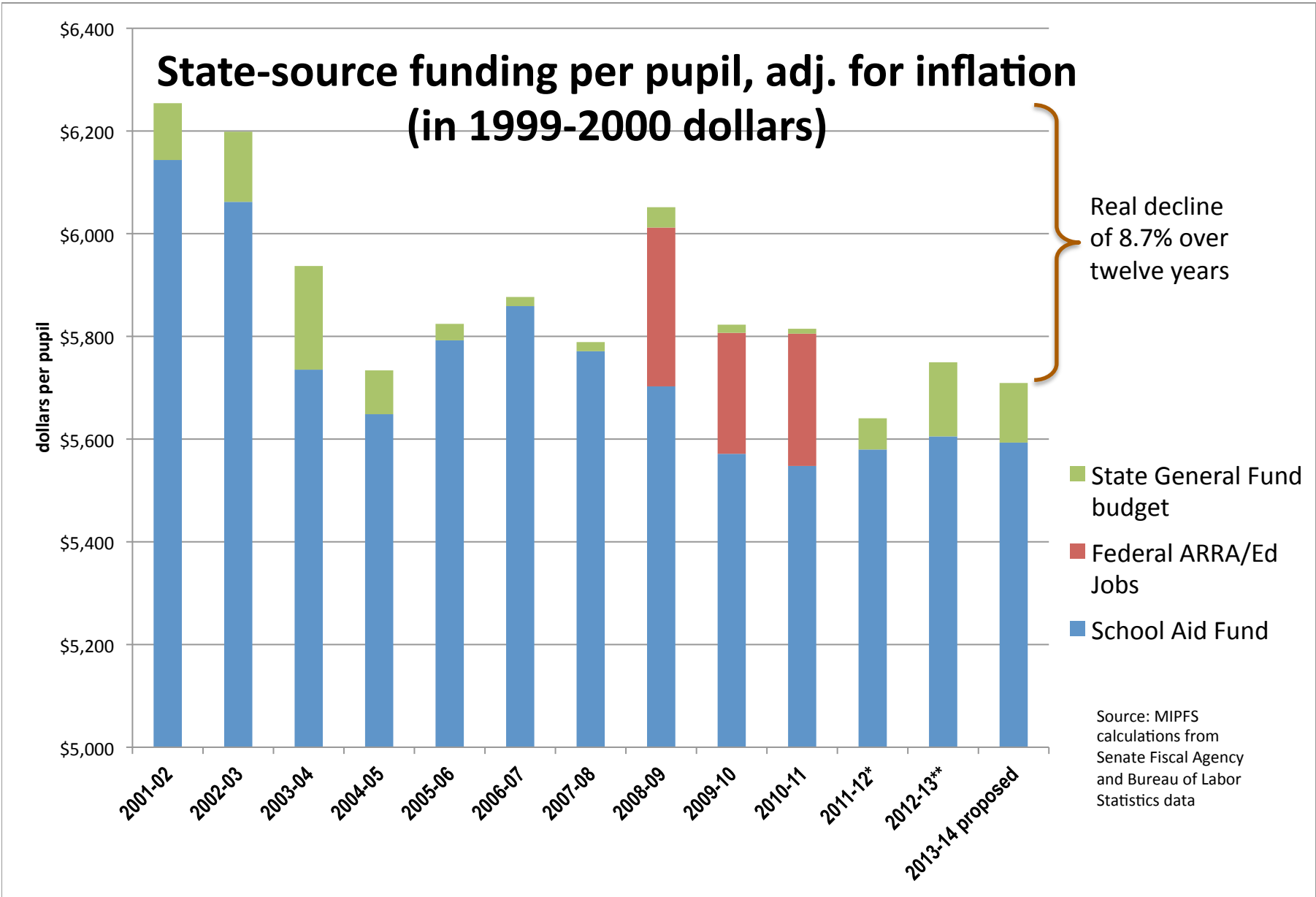
Steven Norton
Executive Director
Michigan Parents for Schools

K-12 education funding from state sources FY02-FY14

Source: Senate Fiscal Agency,
Executive budget proposal







Michigan education spending as percent of state personal income (less transfer payments)

