

### **Chandra will make a difference in Columbus**

In reading the many letters on the subject of Issue 1, the Akron schools levy, valid points are being offered by both opponents and supporters. This is irony not likely lost on the Republican legislators in Columbus, who seem determined to make public education a privilege rather than a right.

How and why are they doing this, and what can we do to change things? The Supreme Court of Ohio has ruled since 1997 that funding public schools with property taxes is unconstitutional. The legislature has failed to take action on these court rulings. The result is a continuing and regular need to ask property owners to subsidize their local systems, guaranteeing a predictable imbalance in the quality of education depending on a community's relative affluence. By refusing to comply with the Supreme Court's ruling, the Republican-controlled legislature makes it all but certain that quality public education in communities like Akron is doomed to constant fiscal crisis.

There is a solution at hand, and it has nothing to do with never-ending, often futile campaigns to pass property-based levies in nonaffluent communities. It involves electing an attorney general who will enforce the law.

Subodh Chandra is alone among candidates for attorney general in laying out a plan to take the legislature to task over school funding. If elected, he would put members of the General Assembly on notice that they are violating the law. If they then refuse to produce an equitable plan for state funding of public education, he will take the case to the Supreme Court on behalf of the citizens of Ohio, for whom the court has already ruled.

We need an attorney general whose first priority is defending the rights of the citizens of Ohio. We have such a potential advocate in the person of Chandra, but if he is to act on our behalf, we have to vote for him on May 2.

Barbara Medlock

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