



River Valley High School

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www.gallialocal.org

Jude Meyers, Superintendent

Timothy Edwards, Principal

Richard Stephens Asst. Principal/AD

Erin Bush, School Counselor

Dama Schultz, School Counselor

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Cera and members of the Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of continued full funding for INFOhio.

My name is Brianna McGuire, I have lived in Gallipolis, a small town in Southeastern Ohio my entire life. One of my fondest childhood memories is my visits to the Bookmobile. Each week, my parents would pack up my little red wagon and pull me up the hill to visit the large van stocked with books from my local library. The employees knew me by name and would give me bookmarks and stickers to take home. Every night I would choose one of the books that I received from the Bookmobile to read before I went to sleep. This cycle continued each week and a love for learning bloomed within me. As I grew older, the Bookmobile's visits grew scarce until they finally ceased. This trend has flourished in my area, not a love for learning, but a tendency of good educational opportunities coming to an end. I remember my elementary school being forced to end annual field trips just one year after being named a National Blue Ribbon School. Field trips and a Bookmobile may not be seen as an absolute necessity, but these opportunities keep students interested in education, which is a serious issue today. In larger, more urban areas, students have access to museums, numerous libraries, research institutions, and Universities that rural students simply do not have access to. Tools such as INFOhio's resources that are accessible to all students have become a necessity for a quality education.

I gained an appreciation for the INFOhio resources at the beginning of the current school year as I began to research for my senior capstone project about the lack of history education. I began using INFOhio's ISearch as a search engine for reliable information, and I became aware that using these resources from INFOhio's ISearch Ohio was a way to increase history education and education in general. My neighbor, a kindergarten teacher at Addaville Elementary school, my alma mater, often uses INFOhio's BookFlix ebooks. She claims it is an invaluable source in her classroom. As I learned more about the INFOhio resources, I began to realize that this tool would have greatly benefited my past National History Day projects and would be a valuable tool to implement into my current National History Day project.

I have participated in Ohio History Day for the past seven years and I have been fortunate enough to represent the great state of Ohio at the National Contest in College Park, Maryland. At the National contest I have had the opportunity to compete against 3,000 students from all 50 states, Washington D.C., American Samoa, Central America, China, Guam, Korea, and Puerto Rico. One of the main components to developing a National History Day project is research. Each year, I have conducted enough research to create a bibliography over ten pages long. As a sophomore, I was proud to compete with a twenty page bibliography consisting of around 100 sources. Each of these sources were cited by hand. With the automatic citation feature of INFOhio, I would have saved time that could have been dedicated to more research or the development of my project. My projects have certainly not been the most researched in the competition. The amount of research needed to compete at a national level is immense.



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Because of my location, I often rely on the Internet for a number of my sources. I do not have access to an abundance of books or primary sources without travelling at least an hour to a large university or other research institution. INFOhio provides a tool for students like me to access quality sources without spending time and money to drive hours away. Even at the state level, larger, urban schools tend to dominate the Ohio History Day competition. In order for rural areas to keep up with the rest of the state and the rest of the nation, these resources from INFOhio are necessary. I can access more, varied, accurate from the databases than our local libraries are capable of housing. This makes INFOhio an invaluable resource to all students, regardless of location. In a society where the use of the Internet and other technology is becoming prevalent, it is important to keep digital sources available and pave the way to the future of education.

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