



Thank you Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Cera, and members of the House Finance Committee, for giving both myself, and Representative Reineke the opportunity to speak today as primary sponsors of HB 508, otherwise known as OhioCorps.

HB 508 is a Pilot Program aimed at helping at-risk, low-income students achieve success in the classroom and transition to the next phase of their educational career. This initiative gives hope to our next generation of bright, young students who through no fault of their own come from challenging family and home circumstances. Any obstacle facing Ohio's students represents future challenges for the state of Ohio, threatening our competitiveness and job growth. The opioid epidemic specifically has ravaged families and communities across the state. HB 508 will provide funding to Ohio's public universities and community colleges to develop the OhioCorps program. It will give a stipend to enrolled college students to mentor at-risk youth and then provide a scholarship to mentees for completion of the program. There will be several scholarship requirements for these students, such as:

- Full participation in the program until they complete high school and following they must enroll in a state university or community college.
- Demonstrates that the student's expected family contribution continually would equal zero dollars each year of high school as determined by FAFSA or receive a letter from teacher or admin which indicates the student is impacted by family opioid addiction
- Achieve either of the following:
 - Remediation-free score on ACT
 - High School GPA of at least 3.0
- Completes college-prep curriculum in high school as determined by the Chancellor
- Completes a community service training program offered by local partner and at least 40 hours of community for each year of high school
- Participates in CCP and receives a passing grade in English and Math

The scholarship will be a one-time amount of \$1,000 and can be adjusted based on availability of funds appropriated by the General Assembly. The scholarship will be paid to each state university or community college in which the student enrolls and shall be credited to his/her account.

OhioCorps is a mentorship program that will operate 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. The Chancellor will submit a report to the General Assembly by the end of the 2020-2021 school year on the implementation and outcomes of the OhioCorps pilot program. The program will be open to all students in the "at-risk" category in South East Ohio and will allow them to attend any Ohio institution of their choice. Universities and community colleges will be required to establish the program for students in the "at-risk" category which is defined as a primary or secondary school student who is at least 13 years of age who would have an expected family contribution of zero dollars as determined by the chancellor of high education or who is impacted by family opioid



addition. Institutions will collaborate with local providers and existing programs to create training, program and service learning opportunities. Students will be encouraged to participate in volunteer activities, partner with a local mentor, and prepare for a college education. The program will partner with AmeriCorps as well as encourage public university partnerships with local providers as an option for the provision of services, reinforcing local efforts already in place.

As members who have made workforce development a priority at the Statehouse, this bill makes a lot of sense. Preparing students for what is ahead is vital to a strong economy and for job growth. Ensuring that they have the resources to achieve their goals, no matter their backgrounds, is crucial. Our goal as legislators is to help everyone, no matter their situation or background, find purpose and opportunity in whatever they choose to pursue. The OhioCorps program allows us to combine resources at all levels of education to help at-risk youth develop the skills and work ethic they need to become prosperous, successful adults and help fulfill our state's workforce needs.

Thank you Chairman and members of the committee. We ask for your favorable consideration of HB 508 and we will be happy to answer any questions that you may have.