

**BEFORE THE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**REPRESENTATIVE RYAN SMITH  
CHAIR**

**HOUSE BILL 508**

**TESTIMONY  
OF  
BRUCE JOHNSON  
PRESIDENT  
INTER-UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF OHIO**

**FEBRUARY 27, 2018**

---

**The Public Universities of Ohio**

The University of Akron  
University of Cincinnati  
Miami University  
Ohio University  
Wright State University

Bowling Green State University  
Cleveland State University  
Northeast Ohio Medical University  
Shawnee State University  
Youngstown State University

Central State University  
Kent State University  
The Ohio State University  
The University of Toledo

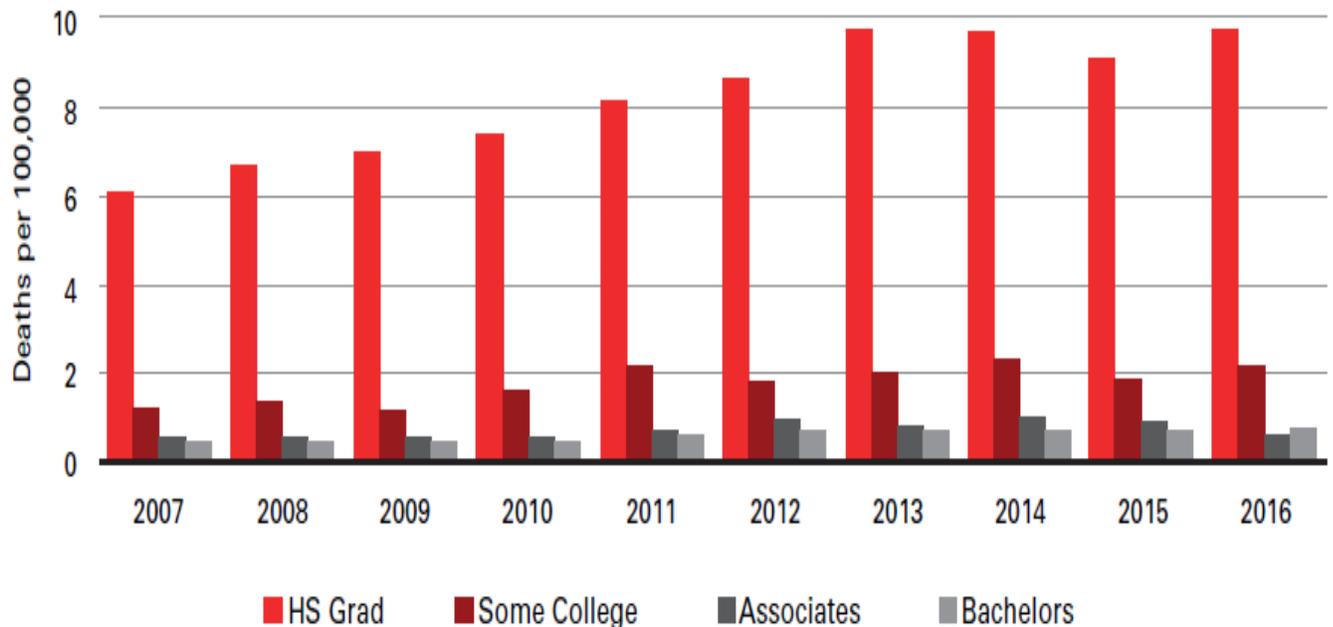
Chair Smith, Vice Chair Ryan, ranking minority member Cera, and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today as a proponent of House Bill 508. My name is Bruce Johnson and I am the President of the Inter-University Council of Ohio.

The IUC was established in 1939 as a voluntary educational association of Ohio’s public universities. Today, the association represents all of Ohio’s fourteen public universities. The IUC values providing access to a high quality, affordable education. It is committed to ensuring affordable opportunities for the more than 330,000 students attending our member institutions without sacrificing the quality of their education or experience. On behalf of Ohio’s fourteen public universities, thank you for your support of higher education.

To the sponsors of the bill, Representatives Scott Ryan and Bill Reineke, and Speaker Rosenberger, thank you for your vision, leadership, and dedication to the growing number of young people and their families all across Ohio, and specifically in Southeastern Ohio, affected by opioid addiction. Your compassion for these families clearly is evident. Your desire to help has been the driving force behind the development of this legislation and is a credit to your public service. Ohio’s fourteen public universities support this legislation and are proud to be part of the solution.

The higher a person’s education level, the less likely he or she is to fall victim to drug abuse and the data demonstrates a direct correlation between drug overdose rates and educational attainment levels. According to a report published by the Ohio State University in October of 2017 entitled “Taking Measure of Ohio’s Opioid Crisis,” data points to a strong connection between educational attainment and overdoses in Ohio. The report demonstrates that those who have only a high school degree experience overdose death rates over 4.5 times higher than those who have even just some college. When compared to those with a bachelor’s degree, those with just a high school degree have overdose death rates 14 times larger.

## OHIO OVERDOSE RATES BY EDUCATION LEVEL



Source: Ohio Public Health Data Warehouse, as cited in Taking Measure of Ohio’s Opioid Crisis, Swank Program in Rural-Urban Policy, October 2017

Clearly, there is a problem and the IUC believes that House Bill 508 can be part of the solution. As Representative Ryan said, this bill is about relationships. It’s about forging relationships between students currently attending colleges and universities, at-risk youth in our communities who one day hope to attend college, and members of the local community who care about these kids and volunteer to participate in the OhioCorps program. These relationships will work to create hope, achieve success, and to ensure we don’t lose an entire generation. It’s about using relationships to create hope and drive success. The chart below demonstrates what earning an associate’s, bachelor’s, or even higher degree can mean to a young person seeking to improve his or her life.

## Occupations that Need More Education for Entry are Projected to Grow Faster Than Average

<b>Employment, wages, and projected change in employment by typical entry-level education (Employment in thousands)</b>				
Typical entry-level education	2016 Employment		Employment change, 2016–26 (percent)	Median annual wage, 2016 <sup>(1)</sup>
	Number	Percent distribution		
<b>Total, all occupations</b>	156,063.8	100.0	7.4	\$37,040
<b>Doctoral or professional degree</b>	4,230.9	2.7	13.1	\$102,230
<b>Master's degree</b>	2,670.6	1.7	16.7	\$68,090
<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	33,372.4	21.4	10.1	\$71,550
<b>Associate's degree</b>	3,617.9	2.3	11.0	\$51,270
<b>Postsecondary nondegree award</b>	9,582.9	6.1	11.1	\$36,860
<b>Some college, no degree</b>	3,858.4	2.5	4.2	\$34,520
<b>High school diploma or equivalent</b>	61,504.1	39.4	5.1	\$35,540
<b>No formal educational credential</b>	37,226.7	23.9	6.4	\$22,410

**Footnotes:**  
<sup>(1)</sup> Data are from the Occupational Employment Statistics program, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Note: The occupational employment and growth rates shown in this table include projected growth in all jobs from 2016–26, not just entry-level jobs. Entry-level education reflects 2016 requirements—BLS does not project educational requirements.

Source: Employment Projections program, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

House Bill 508 creates a new program with two components – mentorship and scholarship. It’s objective is to provide at-risk students with guidance on a pathway to higher education. The program would be created and administered by Ohio’s public institutions of higher education and the “OhioCorps” members would be the community college or public university students who volunteer to work with at-risk youth.

### **Mentorship**

The mentorship component, which would be established and administered by the institution of higher education according to rules promulgated by the Chancellor, must consist of the following elements:

1. A service-learning component for students enrolled in an eligible state institution of higher education that allows them to mentor at-risk middle and high school students living in the southeast region, including tutoring in reading, writing, and mathematics.
2. A service-learning component for students enrolled in the program to help the at-risk students' parents with preparation for college and career planning and to assist in the provision of opioid and drug education programs.
3. Any other elements of community service within service-learning beyond mentoring opportunities as identified by the institution.
4. The provision of a stipend to be paid to student mentors. A plan for training enrolled students to provide such mentoring, including seminars on financial literacy, opioid addiction education best practices, career guidance, and tutor skills.
5. A plan for how eligible state institutions will partner with local providers and existing programs, such as Americorps and the Ohio commission on service and volunteerism to create training, programs, and service-learning opportunities.
6. A provision demonstrating adherence to the recommended best practices adopted by the Ohio commission on service and volunteerism.

### **Scholarship**

The scholarship component is designed for the at-risk students being mentored and would be awarded in recognition of their hard work and successful participation in the program. It is intended to help support their educational goals financially and to help them achieve their own personal educational goals, which ultimately will have a positive impact on Ohio's economic competitiveness. In order to earn that scholarship, the at-risk mentee would have to do the following:

1. Fully participate in the mentorship program.
2. Enroll in an eligible state institution of higher education.
3. Meet either of the following conditions:
  - a. Demonstrate that the student's expected family contribution continually would equal zero dollars in each year of high school OR receive a letter from a teacher or administrator employed by the school district or school in which the student is enrolled which indicates that the student is impacted by family opioid addiction.
4. Achieve either of the following:
  - a. A score that meets remediation-free standards OR have a high school cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
5. Complete a college preparatory curriculum in high school, as determined by the chancellor.
6. Complete a community service training program offered by a local partner and completes at least forty hours of community service for each school year the student is enrolled in high school.
7. Participate in the college credit plus program, and under that program completes and receives a passing grade in at least one course each of English language arts and mathematics.

This may seem like a lot to ask, but part of the purpose of this program is to demonstrate to these young people the value of working hard, fulfilling obligations, and meeting a variety of responsibilities – all of which are necessary to achieve success in life. I have met the students from Waverly, Ohio who first brought their concerns to Speaker Rosenberger and Representative Ryan. Their desire to succeed is evident and deep. They are looking for hope, purpose, and meaning. OhioCorps can provide that and I have no doubt that they will be more than up to the challenge.

Our young people are the foundation of Ohio's future. Any obstacle to increasing the number of Ohioans with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college or work is a threat to our economic competitiveness and to our citizen's opportunities to pursue their dreams. Ohio's public universities thank you for your consideration of this legislation and we look forward to working with you to support and enact the OhioCorps proposal. Thank you Mr. Chairman. I am happy to answer any questions.