

State Representative Bill Dean
Ohio House District 74

House Bill 110
May 3, 2017

Chairman Duffey, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Sweeny and Members of the Ohio House Education Committee: thank you for the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on House Bill 110. The “College Credit Plus Enrollment Option Expansion” is legislation that is necessary for a prosperous future for the State of Ohio.

It is vital to the success of the State and future generations to expand our vision of higher education to encompass not only what is taught in the classroom but also what is gained from real life experience; learning on the job site. This generation is the first generation of “digital natives”; technology has always been a part of their life, which makes them a valuable asset to take part in global competition. The problem is that for far too long, we have been short-sighted, recognizing only the value of higher education, and the road to success, only routing through the classroom and not allowing or encouraging the development of our skilled workforce. Today’s environment in the skilled trades is not that of my father’s or my workplace of decades past. There are many highly technical and highly skilled opportunities existing and emerging in our ever growing skilled workforce job market. In order for these options to become attractive to the next generation in a meaningful way we must educate not only the student but the parent about the value of this work and its indispensable contribution to the State’s competitive viability. This is how we will inspire more Ohioans to remain in Ohio and achieve the American dream.

What is the American dream? The American dream is the ability to aspire, achieve and defy the odds. I know from my own experiences that the American dream is achievable by working in the skilled trades. Prior to April 2016, I never held a public office. I was the owner of a small business, Dean’s Plumbing, in Xenia, Ohio for 27 years. A small business owner and plumber, one thing I have encouraged my children and grandchildren to do is to work with their hands. I do not have a college diploma, but I have worked hard my entire life and achieved success as a lifelong worker in the skilled trades. We live in an incredibly complex society and it would be absurd to think that the only way to achieve success is through obtaining a diploma. Every father wants to leave his children and grandchildren in an even better position in life than he had. I do not want to hinder the next generation by leading them to believe the only way to success is down a path to high debt and low or no job placement in their area of study. The upcoming generation is great, and I believe with options they will be empowered to achieve much more.

Our work ethic is a common thread that bonds us all. The vision of HB 110 is that we should help students who choose post-high school education to have a quicker path to graduation with guidance on what leads to job placement and job stability and also simultaneously redefine the value of higher education by passing this legislation to allow for yet another option for student success through a seamless transition into the workforce. I look forward to answering any questions you might have with my joint sponsor, Representative Hagan.