



**OHIO**

10 West Broad Street, Suite 2450  
Columbus, OH 43215

614-221-4107

Fax 614-221-8677

[www.NFIB.com/OH](http://www.NFIB.com/OH)

June 5, 2019

Representative Paul Zeltwanger  
Chair, Ohio House Economic & Workforce Development Committee  
77 South High Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Zeltwanger:

I am writing on behalf of the nearly 22,000 governing members of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) in Ohio to provide our support for House Bill 2. We commend Representatives Cross and Lepore-Hagan for introducing House Bill 2. Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments.

House Bill 2 allows employers to seek reimbursement for training existing and potential new employees. As business owners across Ohio struggle to fill vacancies and find skilled workers, this bill empowers employers to front resources so employees can obtain the necessary training, ensuring their skill sets keep up with ever-changing demands.

As this committee has heard from the sponsors of the bill, and confirmed in a recent interested party meeting, this bill intends to create a simple, streamlined process for businesses seeking reimbursement for training. Candidly, a lot of our members do not access the existing menu of programs as the requirements to do so in some instances are overly cumbersome. We urge this committee, as it continues to work on this legislation, to preserve a simple process by which the smallest of Ohio's businesses may take advantage and be encouraged to utilize.

We applaud the inclusion of a tiered system so our typical member who employs 20 or fewer, may be able to receive a portion of the appropriated dollars. In other programs, this has proven to be a challenge for our members. The swallowing up of all available resources by larger companies with an employee dedicated to accessing similar programs leaves very little left to smaller enterprises. Please remember, a small business owner usually wears many hats. The tiered provision ensures that Ohio's entrepreneurs may access some of these resources.

NFIB also supports the Industry Sector Partnership Programs to empower industry-similar businesses, workforce development groups, and educational institutions, through grants, to collaboratively work toward the same goal of simultaneously meeting regional employment needs and building tomorrow's workforce.

We support the TechCred and Industry Sector Partnership Programs. We are pleased the substitute bill no longer mandates an increase in wages to access reimbursement and instead makes it a factor for consideration from the Director of the Development Services Agency. Our members are free market business owners, and the prior mandate may have served as a deterrent to employers utilizing this program.

However, the introduced version of House Bill 166, the state operating budget, funded these programs without the significant tax shift contained in House Bill 166 as passed by the Ohio House. We suggest perhaps redirection of resources from an existing workforce development program(s) may be more prudent as we struggle rectifying establishing new general revenue spending while our members are facing a significant tax impact as a result of the erosion of the business investor deduction (BID).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. Please feel free to contact me at [chris.ferruso@nfib.org](mailto:chris.ferruso@nfib.org) or via phone at (614) 221-4107 with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher J. Ferruso". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "F".

Christopher J. Ferruso  
Legislative Director