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Ohio House of Representatives

House Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education

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Testimony by Anthony M. Huffman, Ed.D., OTC Director, Washington County Career Center

Chair Carfagna, Ranking Member Sweeney, and Members of the Ohio House Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education, my name is Tony Huffman. I am currently Director of Adult Technical Training at Washington County Career Center (WCCC) in Marietta, Ohio.

WCCC offers:

1. 10 full-time programs in the fields of medical, industrial, and information technology.
2. 6 part-time programs in the fields of medical, industrial, and information technology.
3. Customized training to local industry.

Our local workforce niche includes providing employers with postsecondary one-year certificate OTC graduates. Our graduates occupy the majority of employed medical assistants at Memorial Health System; the majority of employed surgical technologists at Camden Clark, WVU Medicine; and chemical plant-based industrial workers (chemical operators, instrumentation & electricity technicians, and industrial maintenance technicians) in our polymer zone of the Mid-Ohio Valley, including companies like Solvay-Cytec, DuPont, Kraton, and Chemours. WCCC also offers HVAC, Building Technology, Welding, CDL Truck Driver, and Information Technology. Additionally, WCCC has a robust industrial customized training package which allows local companies to upskill their incumbent workers.

Postsecondary students at WCCC are eligible to apply for the federal Pell grant and the federal WIOA grant. Graduates can articulate to area community colleges and receive credit for the coursework accomplished at WCCC. WCCC enjoys a graduation rate of over 85% and a placement rate of over 75%.

As you can tell we play an important role in workforce development in our county and region. The companies we serve through our customized training services rely on us a great deal to assist them in upskilling their employees and in general maintaining a competitive edge.

Currently, we are grateful for the 'as introduced' version of HB 166 (budget bill), which restores OTC funding to 2001 levels. The restoration will be very beneficial not only to WCCC,

but to all of the 54 OTCs statewide. The increases will allow us to update equipment, expand program offerings both on our campus as well as at business and industry sites, hire additional staff and maintain tuition costs at current levels—all of which will benefit our students as well as the companies who rely on hiring our graduates & consistently need additional training for their employees.

We are most appreciative of your recognition of the value that Ohio Technical Centers bring to workforce development in our great state. In Washington County we work in partnership with our Regional Job Training partners to ensure we are meeting the needs of the communities we serve and providing the residents of our area with access to in-demand job training. This is an example of the kind of work that is done by OTCs across Ohio.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I would be happy to answer any questions.