

May 21, 2019

Chairman Dolan and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

As the Director of Adult Education at Apollo Career Center, I work directly with student pursuing a career in truck driving. Our program is a 200 clock hour program that has a total cost of \$4700.00. Upon completion of the program students can take their CDL test and be employed in a job that earns an average wage of \$44,100 immediately. In Northwest Ohio, we actually see our students earning wages at \$50,000-60,000 per year with full benefits. Truck driving offers an individual substantial flexibility and many jobs allow them to be home every evening.

More than ever we are collaborating with business and industry to attract students into these in-demand careers such as truck driving. As we listen to the needs of our local employers it is clear that students who have obtained a commercial driver's license are in increasingly high demand. One of our biggest barriers is that while truck driving is an in demand occupation with a substantial return on investment for students, it is not eligible for federal financial aid. This has created a huge barrier for students in the past requiring that they pay cash up-front for training. The Ohio Means Jobs Workforce Revolving Loan Fund has had a tremendous impact for students. The Revolving Loan Fund has helped us assist over 100 students over the last three years to obtain training and get out into the workforce immediately after. This assistance has also helped us to attract more diverse populations of non-traditional students into the industry.

When you look at the amount of students who have taken advantage of the Revolving Loan Fund, you have to wonder how many of them could not have been trained without those funds being available. It's been a program that has had a positive impact on students and employers alike. Our usage of more than three full RLF awards, is evidence of the positive impact that the revolving loan has had on making training available to students. More than half of our currently enrolled students are utilizing the revolving loan fund to help finance their education.

We have received a tremendous response from our employers as they learn more about the Revolving Loan Fund. Working with over 70 different employers in the trucking industry, we are seeing students securing employment as soon as they become licensed. Over half of our employers are offering tuition reimbursement to the student to help pay off their loan. Overall the response from employers has been nothing but positive as the amount of students seeking training has increased dramatically with this financing option becoming available.

The Ohio Means Jobs Workforce Revolving Loan Fund has had a rapid and effective impact on producing a skilled workforce in the truck driving industry. As an Ohio Technical Center we also utilize the fund in other areas such as Emergency Medical Technician. I strongly believe that the Revolving Loan Fund achieves its intended goal of decreasing financial barriers to allow Ohioans more access to skilled trades training.

I respectfully ask that the Revolving Loan Program have its funding restored. All students wanting a better future should be able to obtain the training needed for employment in this growing economy. This program benefits all industries, all demographics, and all types of financial need. This is a program that has only just started to take off and the impact it could have on Ohioans is endless.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tasha Sheipline". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Tasha Sheipline  
Director of Adult Education  
Apollo Career Center