

### **Committees:**

Government Accountability & Oversight Committee –  
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Financial Institution, Housing, & Urban Development  
Health and Aging



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## **Tim W. Brown, State Representative** **Ohio's 3<sup>rd</sup> House District**

Chairman Duffey, Ranking Member Ramos, and members of the Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on HB 474, the Higher Education policy update. This bill is a reflection of suggestions from the Department of Higher Education for the House to consider. I will give an overview of the major policy changes in the bill and then pass it over to the Chancellor for additional comments and questions.

### **Bachelor's Degrees at Community Colleges**

This provision requires the Chancellor to establish an application process for community and technical colleges to offer bachelor's degree programs and allows the Chancellor to approve up to 10 bachelor's degree programs.

The application process must take into account: 1.) current bachelor's degree programs in the same geographic area, 2.) workforce needs in the area, 3.) program's relationship to in-demand job training, and 4.) other factors as determined by the Chancellor.

This idea that was included in the As Introduced version of HB 64 is a different format. Community and technical colleges could only offer 4-year degree programs if no state university offered the program within 30 miles and there was demonstrated need for the program in that area.

### **3+1 Agreements**

The Chancellor, in consultation with IUC and OACC, will develop a model "3+1 program" where a student may receive a bachelor's degree by attending a community or technical college for three years and a state university for one year.

### **MHEC's Midwest Student Exchange Program**

This provision permits the Chancellor to endorse the Midwest Student Exchange Program (MSEP), which permits both public and private institutions to participate in the program. It requires a board of trustees to adopt guidelines for the program (including tuition rates, enrollment caps, and admission requirements) and specifies that these students will be classified as nonresidents for purposes of SSI funding.

The MSEP is a multi-state tuition reciprocity program. Through the MSEP, public institutions agree to charge no more than 150% of the in-state tuition rate to participating out-of-state students. Private institutions offer a 10% reduction on their tuition. The receiving institutions maintain discretion on enrollment decisions and admission requirements.

Ohio is currently a member of the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), but is one of three states that does not participate in MSEP (plus Iowa and South Dakota); the nine other states in MHEC have elected to participate in the program.

### **Competency-Based Education**

This provision allows the Chancellor to enter into a partnership with an eligible institution to provide competency based education programs. The institution is considered a state institution for program purposes, but would not receive SSI funding.

The provision defines an eligible institution as “an institution of higher education that is created by the governors of several states;” the only institution that fits this definition is Western Governor’s University.

WGU is an online, nonprofit, competency based university that was established in 1997 by 19 governors. Since then, WGU has developed 6 state-affiliated schools in Indiana, Washington, Texas, Missouri, Tennessee, and Nevada. Students demonstrate mastery of a skill through online testing, rather than in-class time, to receive credit for a course. Currently, WGU offers four programs: Business, Information Technology, Education, and Health Professions.

A provision regarding WGU was also considered in the As Introduced version of HB 64. The Chancellor was to work with state institutions to develop competency based education programs, and if state institutions did not submit plans for approval by December 31, 2015, the Chancellor would establish WGU-Ohio. The proposal was altered to be permissive. State institutions have until July 1, 2016 to submit proposals for competency based education programs if they choose, but as I understand, the Chancellor has not received any submissions.

### **College Credit Plus**

HB 474 makes several updates to College Credit Plus. Regarding the formula for CCP, the bill restores the funding floor (\$40 per credit hour) and clarifies that the funding ceiling cannot be more than the institution’s standard rate. Further, the bill requires the Chancellor and Superintendent to develop rules for which courses are eligible for funding under CCP and rules regarding under-performing CCP students (i.e. students that either withdraw from a course or receive a final grade of D or below).

The bill also creates the College Credit Plus Corequisite Remediation Pilot Program, which allows high school seniors to enroll in remedial courses in math and English under CCP. The student would receive credit for the introductory college course.

These are the more substantial changes in HB 474. You will see that there are other, more technical changes listed on the documents the Department has provided you. Now, the Chancellor will provide additional detail on their proposed programs.