



**Ohio Senate Finance Subcommittee on Workforce
Ohio Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs
House Bill 64 Testimony
May 19, 2015**

Chairman Beagle, Vice Chair Williams, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to address you today. My name is Rebecca Asmo, and I have the privilege of appearing before you as both the Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbus and as a Board Member of the Ohio Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs. Here with me today is Aireeya Turnbow, a Club member from the Boys & Girls Clubs of Erie County, who was recently named Ohio's 2015 "Youth of the Year" in a statewide competition with Club Members from across Ohio. We are here to testify on behalf of the Ohio Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs, to update you on the impact that our Clubs are having throughout the state, and to respectfully request your support of our line item in the budget bill.

First, I would like to applaud Governor Kasich and the entire General Assembly for making great futures for our kids, a top priority in this budget. The Boys & Girls Clubs throughout Ohio represent over 45,000 kids at 63 sites. Since the founding of our first Club in Ohio more than 100 years ago, our organization has grown its footprint and impact over the past century and today plays a critical role in helping children succeed. Our focus on providing programming during "out-of-school time" helps communities bridge the gap between school and home and ensures that our kids have access to programs and mentors that will challenge them to achieve in school, develop a strong moral compass and make healthy lifestyle choices.

With state funding included by the legislature in the last biennial budget, Ohio's Clubs have been implementing the **Boys & Girls Clubs Academic Success Program**. As a result of this funding, and the programs it has helped us implement, the Boys & Girls Clubs throughout Ohio have realized substantial growth in both in our footprint throughout the state and in our impact.

Youth who attend a Boys & Girls Club in Ohio have access to the full range of out-of-school-time programming that Clubs provide including homework help, meals, athletics and character development activities. Under this project, TANF-eligible youth have been driven to participate in a prescription of programs that promote academic success and wellness. Some examples of that programming include:

- 1) *Power Hour* - homework help, tutoring and learning activities
- 2) *Summer Brain Gain* - a comprehensive curriculum of project-based learning activities designed to combat the summer learning loss that is experienced by most low-income youth over the summer break
- 3) *SMART Girls* - a small-group health, fitness, prevention/education and self-esteem enhancement program designed to meet the developmental needs of girls
- 4) *Passport to Manhood*- promotes and teaches responsibility in Club boys through targeted discussions and activities that reinforce positive behavior

These programs are having an impact on the youth we serve, which is illustrated by data collected from Ohio Boys & Girls Clubs through the National Youth Outcomes Initiative, or NYOI. NYOI is our tool for measuring the impact of the Clubs in a consistent manner using a common set of research-informed indicators of Clubs' priority outcomes. This data shows that from 2012 to 2014, the **percentage of Club members who are on grade level for their age increased from 85-90%**. Additionally, the number of Ohio's Club **youth who expect to participate in post secondary-education increased by 3 percentage points – more than 1,300 children**. The percent of Club youth who successfully **obtained summer employment increased from 58-67%** during this time period.

Data about Club Members' overall experience is also reported through the National Youth Outcomes Initiative. **Sixty-four percent of Ohio's Club youth said that the Club is the safest place in their community.** Nearly sixty percent of Club youth reported getting the Centers for Disease Control's recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day, which is more than twice the national average among youth ages 6-18. In short, Boys & Girls Clubs are not just delivering programs – we are delivering results.

Over the course of the past two years, Boys & Girls Clubs has opened 17 new sites throughout the state; therefore serving greater numbers of youth. We expect this growth pattern (both in footprint and in impact) to continue and as a result, we are respectfully requesting your support of a line item of \$625,000 per fiscal year for the Ohio Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs in the TANF Block Grant section of the bill, as it is currently written in the House version of H.B. 64. This line item will enable Clubs across the state to continue delivering targeted, high-quality after-school and summer programs that protect at-risk children and enable youth to become responsible adults.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I will now ask the Ohio Boys & Girls Clubs 2015 Youth of the Year, Aireeya Turnbow, to share with you her story and how the Clubs have had an impact upon her life.

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