

To: Ohio House of Representatives- Education and Career Readiness Committee

From: Dorsey Hager, Columbus/Central Ohio Executive Secretary

Date: [September 12, 2017](#)

Re: Proponent Testimony on HB 98

Chairmen Brenner/ Vice Chair Slaby/ Ranking Member Fedor:

Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony in support of H.B. 98. I offer this testimony on behalf of the Columbus/Central Ohio Building & Construction Trades Council and its 18,000 construction professionals represented by our 19 local affiliate unions.

As the members of this Committee are likely aware, apprenticeship training is a key tenant of the Building Trades. A recent internal survey revealed that union apprenticeship programs spent \$48,208,317.58 on apprenticeship training in 2015. According to the State of Ohio, over 82% of construction apprentices are enrolled in Building Trades affiliated apprenticeship programs. The Building Trades take training the next generation of skilled construction professionals seriously.

Unfortunately, over the past several decades many school districts reduced or abandoned vocational training entirely. This has happened at the same time as the baby boomer generation, who make up the backbone of the Building Trades membership, is nearing retirement. In order to continue to provide Ohio with the highest skilled construction workforce, our apprenticeship programs and local unions have aggressively stepped up recruitment efforts across the state of Ohio.

H.B 98 will aid in our increased efforts to recruit the next generation of skilled construction professionals. While our apprenticeship programs have developed excellent relationships with many school districts, we are still working to build a foundation with. All too often in past decades school districts only judged the success of their students by how many entered college. Unfortunately, too many college students are now saddled with student loan debt that sets them back economically for their entire lives. From the first day of their program, a Building Trades apprentice is paid an hourly wage, health benefits and earns a pension. Our programs offer a tuition free pathway to the middle class. H.B 98 ensures that all students will have the opportunity to learn about a career in the skilled trades and aid our apprenticeship program's efforts to provide a skilled construction workforce to continue to move Ohio's economy forward.

I want to thank the sponsors of H.B 98 Rep. Mike Duffey and Rep. Kristin Boggs for their work on this legislation. Additionally, I appreciate the time and attention of this committee. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments regarding our support of this legislation.