

Testimony before the House Higher Education Finance Subcommittee
Tuesday, March 14, 2017 at 2:00pm
Dr. Monica J. Posey, President
Cincinnati State Technical and Community College

Chairman and Committee members, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Cincinnati State and Ohio's community colleges in general.

I am Monica Posey, president of Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, where I have worked 24 years in roles including associate dean, director of institutional research, academic vice president, and provost. In June 2016, I became president, the first internal candidate in this role since at least 1990.

Like our peer institutions across the state, Cincinnati State is focused on strengthening our role as a workforce development leader, and providing students from all backgrounds with an affordable, first-rate education that leads to an in-demand career, or, for students seeking a bachelor's degree, with the region's best transfer option to a four-year college.

At Cincinnati State, we educate approximately 14,400 students per year. About 9,400 of those students are in credit-bearing programs, including short- and long-term certificate programs, and associate degree programs. Our other 5,000 students are in non-credit customized and open enrollment training programs. In every program, whether it is credit bearing or non-credit, our goal is to identify the needs of employers, align training to meet those needs, and connect employers with our students. Our work covers a wide spectrum of careers and includes training for many of Ohio's most in-demand skills, such as diagnostic medical sonography and nursing, advanced and additive manufacturing, supply chain and logistics, and information technology and cyber security.

Through our nationally acclaimed cooperative education program, our customized training, our employer advisory councils, and our graduates themselves, we are closely connected with hundreds of businesses throughout our region. Examples include GE, Procter & Gamble, Ford, AK Steel and Children's Hospital Medical Center.

One great benefit Cincinnati State offers to employers and our state is that an estimated 90-plus-percent of our graduates stay in the area to work. Yet even with such a high retention rate of our graduates, the growing demand for a skilled workforce exceeds our output.

In this context, we appreciate the concerns that the proposed budget is designed to address, but we have a few points to emphasize:

- Cincinnati State is already the most affordable and accessible higher education institution in the Greater Cincinnati area—so much so that it is facing serious financial challenges. Yet, under the proposed budget aimed at making college more affordable, Cincinnati State would be asked to bear the greatest financial burden in the region when compared to universities. Cincinnati State does not have a problem with affordability. Our challenge is student completion. We must not forget that, unlike the vast majority

of universities, Cincinnati State is an open access college. We provide opportunity for many students who would not otherwise be able to attend college. At the same time, however, open access means we have a large percentage of students needing academic remediation. We also have great needs for disability services, veteran's services, counseling and more. While we are aggressively working on reforms and new ideas to improve student completion, the support system required to meet this challenge at an open access institution is great. A state budget that treats us the same as universities, plus allows exemptions that more likely apply to the universities, is not appropriate.

- Cincinnati State supports the OACC budget recommendations, and would like to emphasize the importance of including \$10 million in FY 19 to provide state support for credit and noncredit short-term certificates tied to in-demand fields. One of our most important strategies to meet employers' needs and move more individuals from poverty to sustainable incomes is providing short-term certificates. At Cincinnati State we are working with the Regional Chamber, REDI, and the Child Poverty Collaborative to increase the number of individuals who complete short-term training and move into employment. Recently, I became aware of a successful case involving women in her 30's who has several children and depends on various forms of public assistance. Through a small pilot grant program she completed a concentrated 90-hour Phlebotomy program at the Cincinnati State Workforce Development Center. Now she is employed at Mercy Health making \$14.75 per hour, has stabilized her family, and has the confidence to continue an education in allied health. Unfortunately, for many women and men in similar circumstances, this educational pathway from poverty to self reliance and family stability is not possible because federal financial aid does not cover the cost of short-term certificates, and special funding is limited. State support is needed.
- Lastly, I appeal for your support in allowing a very limited number of bachelor degree programs at community colleges. This is not about competing directly with area universities, nor is it mission creep. Rather, we are seeking to modernize our academic offerings in order to meet the technical training and education requirements of industry, in specific subject areas not being addressed by our 4-year college partners. Cincinnati State has one such degree in mind—land surveying. We have a strong group of industry partners, members of the Professional Land Surveyors of Ohio and the Tristate Advisory Board, ready to do with whatever is needed to support the work. In fact, on February 21, approximately 20 local surveying employers met on our campus just to talk about this. I would like to read a section from a letter sent to the Governor and Chancellor soon after that. (SEE ATTACHED.) Obviously there is a compelling need.

In conclusion, thank you for your work and time on behalf of the residents and businesses of Ohio. I appreciate your consideration of these issues and the recommendations presented by OACC on behalf of the Ohio two-year colleges. I would be happy to provide any additional information needed.



February 23, 2017

Dr. Monica Posey, President
Cincinnati State Technical and Community College
3520 Central Parkway
Cincinnati, Ohio 45223

Re: HB 474

Dear President Posey:

I want to take this opportunity to let you know I have sent the attached letter lending my support to the passage of HB 474. My efforts stem from the push to support passage of the bill through the Professional Land Surveyors of Ohio (PLSO) and the Tri-State Advisory Board (TSAB). My profession may well hang in the balance.

I have sent the letter to the following individuals:

- Governor John Kasich
- Representative Paul Zeltwanger
- Chancellor John Carey
- Senior Vice Chancellor Gary Cates
- Senator Steve Wilson

If there are other individuals you feel a little nudging would benefit the cause let me know and I will get some additional letters out to them.

Sincerely,

McGill Smith Punshon, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Stephen C. Roat'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen C. Roat, PS
President



February 21, 2017

Senior Vice Chancellor Gary Cates
Ohio Department of Higher Education
25 South Front Street
Columbus, OH 43215

COPY

Re: HB 474

Dear Senior Vice Chancellor Cates,

I am writing today in support of House Bill 474 (and/or subsequent legislation) which in part would enable community colleges to offer four (4) year degrees. The survival of the Land Surveying profession may well hang in the balance with the outcome of this legislation. Allow me to provide some personal experiences as background.

In September 1975, after one year of full time employment with a local surveying company, I entered Cincinnati State Technical College seeking an associate degree in civil engineering technology. Two years later after completion of both surveying core courses and five (5) separate co-op terms, I graduated with an Associate Degree in Civil Engineering. Along the way I also gathered much practical experience in surveying by continuing to work with my previous employer.

Today, I am part owner and President of a 160 year old architecture, engineering, landscape architecture and surveying firm located in southwest Ohio. Armed with the technical training provided by Cincinnati State and my practical work experiences I became a Professional Surveyor in 1989, registered to practice in both Ohio and Kentucky. I have no doubt the education and training I received in the past has adequately prepared me to lead my design firm. However, the future is not a certainty as industry regulations and lack of educational opportunities continue to threaten our profession.

In the late 1980's the Ohio state law regarding professional registration for surveyors was amended to mandate a four year degree prior to undergoing examination and registration. At the time there were several colleges offering a four year bachelor of science in surveying degree including University of Kentucky, Purdue University and Ohio State University. Today, the only college in Ohio offering a bachelor program is the University of Akron. Vincennes University in Indiana also offers a similar program. The direct result of diminished educational opportunities is the declining number of registered professional surveyors.

A reduction in the number of available professional surveyors has several negative consequences. Among those consequences are:

- Fewer qualified surveyors to serve the public interest.
- Fewer registered professionals restricts the growth of firms in business in the State of Ohio as state laws require a majority of shareholders/partners be registered professionals. Company succession becomes problematic.
- Potential students may leave the State of Ohio in order to obtain college education and may not return to the Ohio workforce.
- Fewer entry level crew members and technicians in general



- A threat to the long term viability of the surveying profession.

A relevant but underlying issue is the disparity in overall costs to attend a large public/private university versus a smaller community college. The community college has the ability to provide technical training at an affordable rate more in line with the expected compensation levels in the surveying industry. Graduate students should not have to spend a significant portion of their careers paying off student loans.

My company has a history of utilizing surveying co-op students in our survey field crews. We've had the opportunity to work with many students from entry level to graduates. We have found the students to be well versed in the fundamentals of land surveying, fitting very well into our plans for developing the skills we need to ensure continued success.

I believe Cincinnati State has the requisite facilities, instructor qualification, geographic location and enrollment potential to deliver a four year bachelor program which would be an immense benefit to its graduates, the business community, the surveying profession and to the educational community as a whole.

I strongly believe the passage of HB474 as well as the creation of a four year surveying degree program at Cincinnati State will reinvigorate interest in our profession not only in southwest Ohio but in all of southern Ohio. The profession is greatly in need of additional education opportunities for applicants to satisfy the professional registration requirements.

Your support would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

McGill Smith Punshon, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Stephen C. Roat'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen C. Roat, PS
President

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