

Testimony of David Anderson

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Ohio House Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education

Ohio House Bill 49

Chairman Perales, Ranking Member Ramos, and members of the House Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education, it is a privilege to appear before you. My name is David Anderson and I'm Senior Vice President, State Relations at The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars. The Washington Center has partnered with Ohio since 1997. Students from private and public colleges and universities receive state scholarships and we have enrolled over 1,600 students with state scholarships since the partnership began.

The Washington Center is located in Washington D.C. and was founded in 1975. We are the largest, independent, nonprofit experiential education organization in the United States. We have played a crucial role in preparing young people for leadership and promoting civic participation by connecting motivated students with companies, organizations, congressional offices and federal agencies that exemplify the values of leadership and community service. Nearly all students who participate in our internship program receive academic credit for their semester or summer term in Washington D.C., as we have cooperative agreements with several hundred colleges and universities throughout the United States. The Washington Center has more than 50,000 alumni and provides students with transformational experiences that foster academic and professional achievement, leadership and civic engagement.

In Ohio, we have worked with over 30 schools in our 19-year history. The public universities that have sent us students in the last five years are: Bowling Green State University, the

University of Cincinnati, the University of Toledo, Wright State University, and Youngstown State University. The private colleges and universities that have sent us students in the last five years are: Baldwin Wallace University, Capital University, Case Western Reserve University, Hiram College, John Carroll University, Marietta College, Ohio Dominican University, Ohio Northern University, The University of Findlay, Tiffin University, University of Dayton, University of Mount Union, Walsh University, Wilmington College, and Xavier University. In our academic internship program, students intern 4 days a week at one of the many companies, organizations, congressional offices, and federal agencies that we are partnered with. They take an evening course one night a week. They choose from 7 different Professional Tracks—Advocacy, Service & Arts, Business & Global Trade, Media & Communication, International Affairs, Law & Criminal Justice, Politics & Public Policy, and Science, Technology & Society. On Fridays students participate in what we call the LEAD Colloquium. LEAD includes a speakers series, panel discussions, site visits, and briefings. Through LEAD students participate in civic engagement through advocacy or volunteering and Public Policy Dialogues, a program that enables students to discuss policy with their Representative, Senator, or member of their staff.

Students take all that they learn in Washington D.C., from their internship and course and our programming, and return and serve their state, whether that be in public service, the private sector or in another capacity. They head back to Ohio with business capital, political capital and civic capital.

We are asking the state legislature for \$350,000 per year for each of two years, for a total of \$700,000. An annual appropriation of \$350,000 is a \$105,000 increase from our current appropriation of \$245,000.

With a funding increase, we would plan to cultivate partnerships with 3 to 5 new colleges and universities (both public and private), which would enable more students to take advantage of our program and have a transformational Washington D.C. experience. We would also enhance our recruitment efforts with our existing partners. We would expect a total enrollment of approximately 100 students.

We have great demand for our program from Ohio students. And with the new university partnerships we plan to form, we would have additional demand. To ensure all the students receive a partial state scholarship, which makes the program a reality for so many of them, a larger appropriation is needed.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before the Subcommittee today and thank you for your past support of The Washington Center. I would be pleased to take any questions.