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Good afternoon Chairman Perales, Ranking Member Ramos, and members of the Ohio House Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education and thank you for this opportunity to address all of you today about the various pathways to a public higher education in Ohio. My name is Will Armbruster and I am a sophomore with a major in Political Science and a minor in History. I currently serve as the Vice President of Operations and Chaplin within my fraternity, Sigma Phi Epsilon, and am also a venture manager for two ventures for the non-profit organization Nourish International as well as a member of the Miami University Government Relations Network. My experience is an example of one of the many different pathways there are to access public higher education in Ohio. If the state is to meet its 65 percent degree attainment goal by 2025, the state will need multiple pathways to higher education such as mine.

It is an honor for me to be before you all speaking on behalf of my Miami experience and why Miami University has changed my life. I always wanted to attend Miami. I identify myself as a person with much drive and passion for all that I do. When looking at colleges, I was accepted to several Ohio public and private universities. I applied to Miami University early decision; unfortunately, I never received a letter of acceptance. I struggled with the idea of not being able to attend my dream college and looked for a possible alternate route to the future I wanted for myself.

For me, Miami was the only option. Therefore, I chose to attend the regional campus of Miami University, Miami Hamilton. Selecting the regional campus meant that all of my credits transferred with ease to the main campus after just one semester. Transferring from the regional campus to the main campus requires a 3.0 and the completion of 17 credit hours. Miami's regional campuses do not have housing and local housing proved to be too expensive, so after orientation my mother told me that I would not be able to attend the Miami Hamilton. Again, I was thrown a curve ball and had to think fast. I chose to enroll in Miami University's Regional E-Campus. As an E-Campus student I was able to take 17

credit hours online while living at home in Northeast Ohio and working for my father. This was a very difficult but rewarding experience.

At the end of the semester, I received my reward, acceptance into the school of my dreams, Miami University. My route to Miami was non-traditional and unlike that of most of my peers. My story illustrates the multiple options that Miami University offers students to enroll. At each stage of my decision making process, I witnessed the care that Miami professors and administrators had in wanting me to achieve my goal of becoming a Redhawk. Although some may have felt disappointed upon being denied by their dream school I was inspired and saw opportunity to prove myself and my abilities to others.

Upon enrolling at the Oxford campus in the spring semester of 2016, I immediately became active in campus life. I joined a fraternity and ran for an executive position within the fraternity. I also joined a non-profit organization, Nourish International, whose goal is to make a lasting impact on poverty. In addition, I am a second-year member of the Government Relations Network. I have enjoyed my time and involvement thus far at Miami University and am thrilled to see what the future holds for me.

As my story shows, there are multiple paths to enrolling in college – paths that will be integral to Ohio meeting its 65 percent degree attainment goal by 2025. Miami University allowed for me to take an unconventional route. Because I was admitted to the main campus a semester late, I expected some sort of major adjustment, but that was not the case. My fellow students and professors were all welcoming and helpful when I would ask a question about campus or class. Love and Honor is not just a slogan - us Miami Students say with pride, it is a way of life that cannot be understood unless you experience life on Miami's campus.