



Testimony before the Ohio House Higher Education Subcommittee  
On the Ohio Federal Research Network  
Wednesday March 22, 2017

Chairman Perales, Ranking Member Ramos and members of the House Finance Higher Education Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to come before you today to share the important accomplishments of the Ohio Federal Research Network (OFRN) over the past two years. Truly this innovative partnership is a success for you the Ohio General Assembly and more importantly everyone in Ohio.

My name is Dennis Andersh and I am the executive director of the Wright State Research Institute and the Wright State Applied Research Corporation, but today I am here as the executive agent for the Ohio Federal Research Network.

Driven by the recognition that Ohio needed to do more to meet the research requirements of Ohio's national labs, the Ohio Federal Research Network (OFRN) was created by the Ohio General Assembly in 2015. Your goal for us was to grow federal research spending in Ohio; advance research initiatives aimed at emerging Department of Defense and NASA requirements; enhance university collaborations with Ohio-based small and medium size companies to engage them in the innovation process; create jobs in Ohio for government and industry-related activities; and most importantly have a significant and lasting impact on Ohio's economy.

Together with my partner, Marty Kress, Assistant Vice President for Research at The Ohio State University, and the collaboration of too many groups and individuals to name, I am proud to share that in just two short years, the OFRN has grown to include 11 Ohio Universities, 52 Industry Partners, and the Air Force Research Laboratory, Naval Medical Research Unit-Dayton, National Air and Space Intelligence Center, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration-Glenn Research Center. OFRN also supports a Commercialization and Workforce Development Team composed of Cleveland State University, Lorain County Community College, and multiple industry partners to facilitate the transition of technology to Ohio-based firms.

We have made great strides in this short time and the OFRN's proposal and project management processes and procedures are in place and significant collaborative research initiatives are well underway. To date, OFRN has competitively awarded a total of \$15.8 million and done so through a robust and highly competitive process that engaged key thought leaders and practitioners as evaluators. The research projects are all *aligned with the strategic research priority areas* of the Air Force Research Laboratory, Naval Medical Research Unit – Dayton, National Air and Space Intelligence Center, and the NASA Glenn Research Center and have included *11 universities and 59 industry partners* (26 small businesses) in addition to the national labs.

Based on our success to date, OFRN now stands ready to serve as the foundation for the Governor's new Ohio Institute of Technology.

The key to the OFRN has been the incredible collaboration with ODHE, JobsOhio, the Ohio Third Frontier, and the Governor's Office and our many partners. Not surprisingly, as the OFRN's leadership team was assessing its future evolution, the OIT initiative became a key catalyst.

As you may recall, a key driver for the creation of the OFRN was to incentivize Ohio's Universities and industry partners to collaborate with a focus on Federal opportunities and industry-sponsored research i.e. to leverage the State investment. At present, thanks to the OFRN, multiple universities across the state are pursuing joint proposals totaling over \$200M through the Air Force Office of Scientific Research, the Air Force Research Laboratory, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, the Army Research Office, NASA and the Office of Naval Research. As a result, there have been over \$32M+ of new awards statewide in the past 6 months. I am also pleased to report that there are other significant new efforts currently in the pipeline across the state based on the OFRN Initiative.

OFRN is working to capitalize on other key investments and activities such as the Joint Additive Manufacturing Effort with the Air Force Research Laboratory from Youngstown State University, Kent State University, and Youngstown Air Reserve Unit to help reduce the challenge of part obsolescence. This effort leveraged ODHE's Rapids Program.

The ultimate goal state of the OFRN in support of the Governor's newly framed Ohio Institute of Technology Initiative is to continue to:

- Support the model for rapid technology innovation and accelerating "Research for Development", working closely with Ohio based industries.
- Ensure there is a significant ROI for State investment – additional funding, supportive business environment, new jobs and opportunities, accelerate R for D and commercialization.
- Grow collaboration across State – capitalize on relationships with Jobs Ohio, Third Frontier, ODHE, OAACT, and other statewide and regional initiatives, OAI, DDC, etc.
- Integrate Ohio assets across sectors to solve pressing commercial and federal technical problems.
- Foster and promote multi-purpose facilities -- address multiple user needs with current facilities – and capitalize on key State investments like OARNET.
- Enable Rapid Prototyping and Engineering Demos -- validate emerging technologies & position Ohio in the marketplace of tomorrow much like what is done at DARPA, ARPA-E, and IARPA.
- Expand the recognition, by the Air Force, that Ohio research institutions can support rapid innovation that will result in a new Ohio based University Affiliated Research Center (UARC) that focusses on system of systems solutions for the Air Force and DOD.

Regardless of future, going forward, the OFRN will ensure that State funded activities support challenge grant problems and enhanced R&D efforts that will maintain their highly competitive nature. You can be assured that any investment of state funds you make with the OFRN, those funds will be treated as the vital investment to be leveraged and on which we can capitalize.

Again, thank you Chairman Perales, Ranking Member Ramos and members of the House Finance Higher Education Subcommittee, for this opportunity to share the important accomplishments of the Ohio Federal Research Network (OFRN) and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

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