

**Ohio House
Finance, Primary and Secondary Sub-Committee
HB 49, State Biennial Budget
Testimony of Krista Hussar, Legislative Chair
Ohio Association of Comprehensive and Compact Career Technical Schools
March 16, 2017**

Chair Cupp, Ranking Member Miller, and members of the committee, I am Krista Hussar, Legislative Chair of the Ohio Association of Comprehensive and Compact Career Technical Schools (Ohio CCS). As you heard from Amy earlier, Ohio CCS represents two of the three delivery systems for career technical education, and in contrast to Amy's summary of her comprehensive delivery system, I'd like to share with you a snapshot of my compact delivery system.

I am the Director for South Stark Career Academy, which is a compact comprised of four local school districts in Stark County that offer a total of 19 career tech programs. The majority of the programs are located at the two larger districts, while the two very small districts each house a business administration program. 15 of the programs enroll students from all 4 districts. A few of our 19 programs are duplicates, such as two Pre-Engineering programs at different sites with different capstones, and multiple business or finance programs at different sites with unique course offerings. Six of our programs have approved industry credentials.

Ohio CCS appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on HB49, and while we know much of the discussion regarding the College Credit Plus (CCP) program is being had in the Higher Education Sub-Committee we'd like to take a moment share our concern regarding the language contained in HB49 that makes significant changes to the CCP program. Our first concern is the elimination of the ability for agreements between high schools and colleges that are below the floor for CCP. Currently, many of our members have agreements below the floor with their post-secondary CCP partner; often these agreements are reached when the teacher and facility are the responsibility of the secondary partner. These agreements provide students and parents with great opportunities for free college credit while attending high school at low or no cost to the secondary partner.

If the elimination of the alternative agreement language remains in HB49, we are very concerned that we will not be able to afford the additional cost. We know that during previous testimony before this committee it has been shared that the number of post-secondary partners offering agreements below the floor is limited, however, we know for those secondary partners it is absolutely necessary to maintain those agreements in order for them to continue to offer the variety of CCP courses to their students.

For example, more than 20 school districts in Stark and surrounding counties have a negotiated agreement with Stark State College that requires districts to pay \$28/credit hour for courses taught at our schools by our staff, and also for online course offerings. That is \$13.50 below the

floor for every credit hour taught on our campuses, and \$138 below the ceiling, which is typically the cost for every credit hour taught online. In 2016-17, one of my districts has students taking 632 credit hours taught by our faculty and 54 additional hours online. The cost without our negotiated agreement would increase by \$15,984. Even with the negotiated agreement below the floor, the district has seen a significant increase in overall college credit plus costs because we see the value of offering a variety of courses to our students. As of now, we have been asked to hold off on adding more CCP courses outside the core academic subject areas. There are many more college credit opportunities I could pursue for my career tech programs, but just like every other area district dollars are spent, there is a limit on what dollars can be spent on CCP. If our right to negotiate agreements below the floor is taken away, thus increasing the cost for CCP courses significantly, there will certainly not be any additions to my career technical CCP options, and there may even be cuts to non-academic-pathway CCP offerings on our campus. It is important to note that some of these career tech CCP courses are our direct link to industry-recognized credentials, such as EMT Basic and the Microsoft Office bundle.

Finally, we'd like to briefly to speak to the \$2.2 million dollar cut to Career Technical Enhancements that largely impact the Tech Prep Expansion Grants. By explanation provided by the Department, we understand the reductions will largely impact the number of funded staff and technical assistance provided to school districts. More specifically, we want to emphasize the importance of our tech prep consortiums, which provide high levels of support from our postsecondary partners. The tech prep centers organize and facilitate regional professional development for teachers and administrators, lead the development of articulation agreements, partner in the completion of CTE-26 program applications, serve as liaisons in communication with the office of Career Tech at the Ohio Department of Education, and more. While this reduction may not directly impact our day-to-day programs, at a time when the expansion and necessity of career technical education is at the forefront of Ohio's education discussion, we believe it is short sighted to make such a significant reduction in funding to any portion of funding that supports career technical education.

These very important issues affecting career-technical education in our 42 compact and comprehensive career-technical planning districts across Ohio. Again, I appreciate the ability to convey our concerns and will answer any questions you may have.