****

State Representative Mike Duffey, 21st District

**Sponsor Testimony – Rep. Duffey**

**HB 98 (Duffey, Boggs): “The Ohio High School Career Opportunity Act”**

**Ohio Senate – Education Committee – January 17, 2018**

Chairwoman Lehner, Vice-Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Sykes, members of the Senate Education committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding House Bill 98. This bill would establish minimum access standards for universities, trade schools, employers, and military recruiters to have the *opportunity* to present career information two (2) times per year to Ohio high school students - a right that does not exist in Ohio law today.

At a Columbus Metropolitan Club forum two years ago, a recruiter for The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center informed the audience that the system had 1,500+ entry-level jobs available that did not require a college education, but which could not be filled, primarily due to lack of applicants. The recruiter complained that Ohio schools are not always welcoming.

At the same forum, an official from the Ohio State Building and Construction Trades Council indicated his member trade schools had difficulty reaching Ohio high school students to discuss the rewarding careers and six-figure wages available in the construction trades because school districts were at times unwelcoming and refused access to setup informational tables.

This got me thinking: What are the standards Ohio uses to establish minimum access within our districts to various recruiters (college, trade, employer, military) of high school students? The answer is Ohio has no real minimum standard today except ORC 3313.471, which bars school districts from discriminating against military recruiters. In other words, if a school district does not allow \*any\* recruiters into their schools, then they are legally compliant.

For universities, trade schools and employers who request access, there is no legal standard. Schools may completely refuse to offer access and there is no appeal process. As a result, recruiters have given up trying to access Ohio students. At a time when the legislature wishes to encourage health care, manufacturing and other skilled trades, this is an unacceptable standard.

HB 98 recently passed the Ohio House unanimously by a vote of 92-0. To be clear, HB 98 does not require schools to do anything other than offer access, and even then, only if asked. A school district may create its own screening process, as long as it adheres to federal law. A school district may also tell recruiters that they could only show up on the last Friday of the semester, only for an hour in the cafeteria, and only at tables for this purpose and only if approached.

In other words, HB 98 gives schools an incredible degree of flexibility. The only restriction is that a school district must allow two opportunities, and only if asked.

Thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony, Chairwoman Lehner. Rep. Boggs and I would be happy to answer any questions from the committee.

# # #