



HB-98 Testimony

- Century Die Company is a manufacturer of blow mold tooling, primarily supporting the plastic packaging industry.
 - Century employs over 70 people in the NW Ohio community of Fremont.
 - The majority if these employees range from semi-skilled to very highly skilled
- The pool of well-seasoned, experienced employees does not support our, nor all of the other manufacturers in the area.
 - About 4 years ago, Century recognized that the best route to fulfilling the need for skilled employees was to “grow” them, or train our youth.
 - The biggest issue that we encountered was that young adults were not aware of the types of rewarding, high paying careers that are available right in their own community.
 - To combat this, Century developed a proactive plan to educate the youth in these opportunities. 20 years ago, these students would have had the opportunity to experience hands on classes in Industrial arts.
 - Century’s “Moldmaker Professional for a Day” is a one day shadow program for any student 7th – 12th grade. They spend the entire day at Century spending time with employees in every facet of the company. From Project management, Engineering, Accounting, and every manufacturing area on the floor. We provide them lunch, and a Logo’d “T”-shirt which they wear to school which further advertises the opportunity. All of the local schools and counselors have embraced and supported this, and in some cases have used the program for their “Career readiness” curriculum.

- Several local businesses have shown interest in doing this as well, so Century, with the support of these other businesses is working on forming a Consortium so that there are multiple avenues for job shadowing.
- Century also sponsors the “Green Box Derby” which is a soapbox derby for the students which gives them the opportunity to be creative and build a car to race. This also builds sportsmanship and teamwork skills. Century awards \$4500 annually in scholarships to Terra State College in this event.
- As a chair to the Sandusky County Chamber of Commerce “Education and Workforce Development committee, we are developing the “BRIDGE” (Business Resource for Innovative and Diverse Growth with Educators) which is a website portal to bring Businesses together with students and educators for opportunities such as job shadowing, internships, special projects and entry level jobs.
- All of the area schools have welcomed and supported all of these efforts.
- The results are proof that there is a great need for this awareness effort. Five years ago Century had nine Millennial’s, zero apprentices and a mean employee wage of 54. Today, Century has 22 Millennial’s, six apprentices, and a mean employee wage of 44.
 - We are convinced that if we were not allowed to interact with these students that the statistics we had five years ago would be nearly the same today. The opportunity to interact with the students is critical as they do not receive this exposure in any other path. Even most of the instructors are not aware or have any experience in manufacturing, so where would they learn of the opportunities if Manufacturer’s were not given the opportunity to share?
 - It is our opinion that the passage of this bill is critical to insure viable candidates for manufacturing especially when it comes to skilled labor.
 - There are few shortages of students heading off to college, but the shortage of skilled employees continues to grow astronomically. The reason is simply unawareness and the lack of hands on experiences they could receive through apprenticeships.