



**State Senators Bill Beagle and Troy Balderson
Senate Bill 3 Sponsor Testimony
Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee
February 1, 2017**

Chairman LaRose, Vice Chairwoman Kunze, Ranking Member Tavares, and members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee, Senator Balderson and I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Senate Bill 3.

In my time on the Governor's Executive Workforce Board, we have worked diligently to identify Ohio's in-demand jobs, create a system that is easier for both workers and employers to use, and to introduce metrics and dashboards to help understand if our programs are working. Still, in September the Governor challenged the Board and the Office of Workforce Transformation to develop recommendations to create a pre-K to workforce system to help Ohioans prepare for the jobs of today and tomorrow. In December the Board submitted its recommendations to the Governor. Some of these recommendations are in SB3.

The theme of these recommendations is to make education more responsive to our students, parents and employers by providing students the skills our employers are demanding. This is done by either developing connections between our business community and our schools, or by strengthening and broadening existing relationships. The key provisions of SB3 are the following:

- Establish an optional recognized pre-apprenticeship career pathway for career technical education students.
- Provide the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction with rule making authority to establish criteria to expedite issuing of Certificates of Qualification for Employment to qualified individuals.
- Create a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) designation for certain STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) schools that integrate art and design into the STEM curriculum and expand the grades that STEM and STEAM schools can serve to Kindergarten-12.
- Charge the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Higher Education to work collaboratively with Ohio's major business organizations to create a strategic plan for increasing project-based learning and develop professional development programs that address how to build authentic, real-world, project-based learning into the curriculum.

- Require the Ohio Department of Education, in coordination with the Ohio Department of Higher Education, to develop a Regional Workforce Career Counseling Collaboration model in which the JobsOhio Network, local chambers of commerce, local school districts, local businesses and others build county-level partnerships that provide career services to students. These services may include job shadowing and internship experiences, career exploration activities, and problem-based curriculum developed around local employer needs.
- Promote an annual “Ohio In-Demand Jobs Week” organized by the Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation, in coordination with the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio Department of Higher Education and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Job fairs or tours of companies that have in-demand occupations would be one of the activities that would occur as a way to connect middle and high school students with prospective employers.
- Develop an “OhioMeansJobs-Ready Certificate” for high school students who demonstrate their work-readiness by successfully exhibiting work ethic competencies (such as teamwork, problem-solving, reliability, punctuality, etc.) and attaining at least four objective competencies – including community service and technology – before graduation.
- Update Ohio law to comply with requirements in the federal Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act.

The need for a skilled workforce continues to be one of the primary challenges for employers in Ohio. I hear it throughout my district as I engage my businesses. The provisions in SB3 will work in concert with the other recommendations to the Governor that are included in the Executive Budget to further improve all facets of Ohio’s workforce system.

Chairman LaRose, and members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee, Senator Balderson and I thank you for the opportunity to share sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 3. We are happy to take questions at this time.