



**Ohio Senate  
Finance Committee  
Sub. HB166 Interested Party Testimony  
Testimony of Tim Buschur  
Tri-Star Career Compact**

Chair Dolan, Vice Chair Burke, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the Ohio Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present interested party testimony for Sub. HB166. My name is Tim Buschur, and I am the Director of Tri-Star Career Compact in Celina, Ohio. Tri-Star is a Compact Career-Technical Planning District which includes the districts of Celina City Schools, Coldwater Village Schools, Fort Recovery Local Schools, Marion Local Schools, Minster Local Schools, New Bremen Local Schools, New Knoxville Local Schools, St. Henry Local Schools and St. Marys City Schools. Additionally, I am the current Treasurer of the Ohio Association of Comprehensive and Compact Career-Technical Schools (Ohio CCS) and past-president of the Ohio Association of Career-Technical Education (Ohio ACTE). Today, I am here testifying on behalf of Ohio CCS, Ohio ACTE and the Ohio Association of Career-Technical Superintendents. Collectively, these associations represent the entire career-technical community, including schools, teachers, administrators and students.

I am here to express my concern about the language contained in HB166 to freeze education funding at the FY19 levels for FY20/21, which is being interpreted to include career-technical education (CTE) "weighted" funding (ORC 3317.014). In 2015, to achieve the workforce development goals and grow CTE, "weighted" funding was moved outside the cap/guarantee. By moving these funds outside the cap/guarantee, CTE providers have been able to start new programs and serve more students.

I would like to explain how this funding freeze would specifically impact Tri-Star Career Compact at a critical point in our growth. Tri-Star is opening the new Tri-Star 2.0 facility for the 2019/2020 school year. This new facility will bring all of our CTE programs together under one roof, allow us to expand our programs and increase our ability to serve students. I will be serving 80 new students and adding

a new career pathway with Cyber Security. Under the current budget proposal, we are told we will not receive any new funding to serve these students, and would be expected to serve them at our FY19 funding level; in what I believe to be a conservative estimate, this represents approximately \$98,000 in lost funding.

Further, because we are a compact delivery system, this means certain programs are now going to be administered under a different district plan than in FY19. Seven programs will be discontinued at one district and started at another district; these pathways are all weighted at the highest level of CTE funding. ODE has approved the transfer of these programs, but under the budget language, I have concern with how the funding will be implemented. In my understanding of the current bill language, the districts with the discontinued programs will continue to receive the funding, but the new district where the programs will be started will not receive funding. This creates quite an accounting issue for our career compact. Again, in what I think is a conservative estimate, we are talking about approximately \$275,695.

Finally, attached to my written testimony is a letter further outlining the concerns of the CTE community and providing specific examples of how it would impact my JVSD counterparts. I encourage you to review the letter and examples of the impact to their delivery model.

I could go on for quite a while about how the funding freeze at FY19 levels are bad for Tri-Star, but in an effort to keep my testimony concise, I'll stop there and offer to answer any questions you may have. Thank you, again for the opportunity to explain how HB166 will impact Tri-Star Career Compact.



May 15, 2019

The Honorable Matt Dolan, Chair  
Ohio Senate Finance Committee  
One Capitol Square  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

**Re: State Operating Budget / CTE School Funding**

Dear Chair Dolan,

On behalf of the career-technical education (“CTE”) community in Ohio, represented by the **Ohio Association of Career-Technical Education (“Ohio ACTE”)**, the **Ohio Association of Career-Technical Superintendents (“OACTS”)**, and the **Ohio Association of Compact and Comprehensive Career-Technical Schools (“Ohio CCS”)**, we write to express a significant concern regarding the school funding framework contained in the state budget bill As Passed by the House (HB 166), which would essentially freeze funding (including “weighted” funding for career-tech programming) at FY 2019 levels.

Background: In addition to the set dollar amount career-technical schools (like all others) currently receive per high school student, the state also provides supplemental dollars (“weighted” or “tiered” funds) to operate secondary CTE programs. These funds are critical as they pay for the cost of our supplies and equipment, which are far more expensive than those needed for a traditional academic classroom. Ohio law outlines five different tiers of per-pupil weighted funding, which have been strategically established based on job and workforce data; the most “in-demand” programs receive the highest level of funding.<sup>1</sup>

In 2015, in order to expand career-tech, we worked closely with the General Assembly to adjust the funding formula and place CTE weighted funds outside the traditional “cap and guarantee.” The legislature made this change to facilitate our schools’ ability to recruit new students and create new programs. As a result, we currently receive additional weighted funding if we add more students, but lose funding if enrollment declines—regardless of whether a school is on a cap or guarantee.

HB 166 Funding Freeze: HB 166 would freeze our weighted funding at FY 2019 levels. We would receive no supplemental funding for additional career-tech students and would again struggle to offer any new career-tech programming—just as employers are experiencing historically high demand for skilled workers (a phenomenon the business community in Ohio continues to emphasize). The existing structure for weighted funding is crucial for career-technical schools to respond to the evolving workforce needs of their regions—including establishing satellite programs to increase accessibility of CTE, and creating customized training programs to respond to unique needs of industry. For example:

1. Butler Tech Career Campuses (SW Ohio): Despite being on the cap, projected to create over 12 new programs, including those in new/emerging mechatronics and aviation fields. Overall, Butler Tech

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<sup>1</sup> See R.C. 3317.014, which outlines the applicable tiers. For example, a career-technical school receives \$5,192 per student enrolled in agriculture, construction, engineering/science, manufacturing, and health systems programs (the highest tier). Alternatively, our schools receive \$1,308 per student enrolled in family and consumer science programs (the lowest tier).

will experience a net increase of 14 instructor positions, plus supply, equipment, and renovation expenses. A freeze to weighted funds could jeopardize this expansion.

2. Pickaway-Ross Career & Technology Center (Chillicothe, OH): Despite being on the guarantee, created 11 new programs and transferred 9 existing programs to in-demand occupational training, all because the state moved tiered funding outside the cap/guarantee. PWCTC has also collaborated with its partner schools to create 25 new middle school programs.
3. Belmont-Harrison Career Center (Clairsville, OH): Despite being on the guarantee, created 8 new middle school programs, and 3 new (construction trade) high school programs—partly in response to the workforce needs of PTT Global’s 8-10 billion dollar Ethan Cracker construction project in Belmont County. These programs are at risk if the state freezes weighted funds.
4. Great Oaks Career Campuses (SW Ohio): Despite being on the cap, projected to add 14 new satellite programs, including those in the high demand fields of health technology, construction, and advance manufacturing.

Many of our schools have already ordered new equipment and recruited teachers and students for next year’s programs based on the assumption that weighted funds were to be paid based on enrollment. In total, over the upcoming biennium, career-technical schools across Ohio are projected to create 382 new career field pathways, including 34 new career-based intervention programs, 19 new family and consumer science programs, and 249 new senior-only industry credentialing programs. If our weighted funding is frozen at FY 2019 levels, many of these new programs could be at risk.

We recognize that placing CTE weighted funds outside the freeze may result in some schools receiving less state funding. However, our ability to expand CTE statewide and create new options for high school students takes precedence. We urge the Senate to adjust the proposed school funding formula and place CTE weighted funds outside the proposed funding freeze, consistent with current law. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Christine Gardner  
Executive Director, Ohio ACTE



Bill DiMascio  
President, Ohio CCS



Margaret Hess  
Executive Director, OACTS

cc: The Honorable Mike DeWine, Governor  
The Honorable Jon Husted, Lt. Governor  
The Honorable Larry Obhof, President, Ohio Senate  
The Honorable Larry Householder, Speaker, Ohio House of Representatives  
The Honorable Scott Oelslager, Chair, Ohio House Finance Committee  
Paolo DeMaria, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Ohio Department of Education