

HB 514

Rep. Denson:

Chairman Lanese, Vice-Chair Young, Ranking Member Ingram, and my colleagues of the Ohio House Higher Education and Career Readiness Committee. Thank you for allowing me and Representative Cross to testify on House Bill 514, the GROW Ohio Act, that will help our state retain students after graduating.

As my co-sponsor stated, over the next decade Ohio is projected to have an 11% decline of High School graduates. As high school graduation rates drop, we will see a significant stall in college enrollment from young Ohioans as a result. Ohio colleges bring in students from many of our neighboring states including Pennsylvania, Illinois, Michigan, New York, and Indiana. However, what we are seeing now from out of state students is low retention rates in the Ohio workforce upon graduation. Of course, no state retains all of their college graduates, however the exodus of educated young adults in Ohio has become alarming.

There will be a significant, tangible revenue loss for the State as a result of students moving out of Ohio after graduation. In pursuance of this we attempted to estimate the revenue loss associated with graduates of “in-demand” degree fields leaving the state after graduation:

- Biological and Biomedical Sciences degreed graduates \$4M - \$6M
- Computer and Information Sciences degreed graduates \$5M - \$8M
- Engineering degreed graduates \$23M - \$33
- Engineering/Engineering-Related Technologies/Technicians degreed graduates \$3M - \$4M

Studies show that many students are leaving the state after graduation due to their frustrations and beliefs that Ohio does not have a competitive job market with competitive salaries and seems to have limited opportunities for upward social mobility. Current college students have expressed that although they have plans to leave the state to explore other opportunities they would love to come back to Ohio after their graduate program(s) and/ or after gaining work experience because Ohio is home.

HB 514 presents an opportunity to solve the issues I just addressed. The Support GROW Act is vital to the social and economic growth of Ohio. The incentives found in this bill such as scholarships and tax credit(s) for young adult(s) entering the labor market are the step in the right direction for not only persuading students to stay in Ohio long term but to also help them get settled into their jobs without the long- term stress of student loans.

It is true that the value of a Bachelor's Degree and investing into higher education has proven to not only decrease incarcerated rates, create civically engaged adults, but also increased worker productivity, higher salary and wages, increased life expectancy, a healthier population, and inevitably a healthier Ohio. That's why Rep. Cross and I are here today to urge you to pass HB 514 so that we can keep Ohio natives as well as non-Ohio natives in the state by listening to their concerns and improving their situations. We are happy to take any questions.