



## **STEM Entrepreneurship & Innovation Program for Students to Help Develop Ohio's Future Workforce**

**Popularly Known as the “*Believe in Ohio Student STEM Innovation & Scholarship Program*”**

Chairman Dolan, Ranking Member Sykes, and Members of the Committee. I am offering this written testimony in support of Amendment SC2521X1 to Substitute House Bill 110, “STEM Entrepreneurship and Innovation Program for Students to Help Develop Ohio's Future Workforce”, which continues funding of what is more popularly known as the “Believe in Ohio Student STEM Innovation and Scholarship Program”.

My name is Laurie Godfrey. I am a retired Curriculum Director and former science and math teacher for Lorain City Schools. I have been a STEM Advocate for Believe in Ohio since the program began in 2014. Thank you for the opportunity to tell you about my support for the Believe in Ohio program.

Students today learn well when the learning is relevant to their lives. They are highly motivated when they direct their learning path. They become the expert, gain confidence and understand how all their learning is connected. The Believe in Ohio program provides exactly this as a learning opportunity.

I have always been a STEM Advocate. As a teacher I saw my students working through their science fair projects. Designing their experiment, organizing data and drawing conclusions was a large part, but it was when it was synthesized into a written report, charts, graphs and display, that students realized all that they learned. They saw how all the subjects they had been studying became important as they completed their project. When I was first approached to work with Believe in Ohio it was the problem-based long-term learning and similarity to a science fair project that drew me in. Here was a match of science and all other relevant subjects yet it went deeper for high school students because the Believe in Ohio approach allows them to see the impact that STEM has on their future--wherever their path leads them. And, Believe in Ohio demonstrates what entrepreneurship is and that it can quite possibly be in their future when before, they had no idea.

As a curriculum director in a high poverty district, my goal was to provide curriculum to teachers that allowed them flexibility in the delivery but structured enough to provide the needed guidance and resources to ensure that all the important elements i.e., objectives could be met without obstacles. Believe in Ohio has built a well-thought-out curriculum based in a Google Classroom which delivers clear direction for the teacher to implement with an abundance of resources to choose from to engage the students in their learning. Help with each step from a design-thinking team building activity, to developing a personal problem to solve or an idea to develop, to researching the connected STEM concepts, and finally writing the formal paper is provided. All through the project students are practicing thinking like an entrepreneur.

The Believe in Ohio program is an incredibly strong opportunity for our students to learn and be engaged in the “what comes next” after high school. The incentives at the high school level and scholarship opportunities are another important element to this program. I strongly encourage you to approve this amendment to Substitute House Bill 110.

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