



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 Kelly Coyne. I am a teacher at Notre Dame Cathedral Latin School in Chardon, Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to tell you about my support for the Believe in Ohio program and how important the program has been to our science department.

I have been a teacher for six years and have taught honors chemistry, general chemistry, and an elective science course throughout my time at Notre Dame Cathedral Latin. I was introduced to the Believe in Ohio program during my first year of teaching by the business teacher at our school. Her entire introduction to business course was centered around the Believe in Ohio roadmap. I was impressed at the level of engagement of her students. I was eager to learn about the STEM aspect of the Believe in Ohio program, which I did at a professional development workshop. I knew, as a brand-new teacher, that this program was something that I could easily incorporate into my already existing curriculum, which was very important to me. Over the course of my 5 years of working with the Believe in Ohio program, I constantly was amazed by the level of engagement of my students, the quality of their work, and the interest they shared for STEM fields. Completing their projects broke the potential monotony of school work and allowed them the freedom to use their creative and intelligent brains in a new and exciting way. This is the kind of passion we need to ignite in our young adults if we want to continue to see change in the world. The Believe in Ohio program sets an incredible foundation for this to happen. My students become interested in areas that they didn't even know were out there and the program allowed for them to step out of the bounds of the normal chemistry curriculum. It taught them to question, research, to think critically, and to write scientifically. Past students have shared how vital those skills are in succeeding in science courses in college. These are the skills that our students need to succeed. The Believe in Ohio program, again, provides the perfect foundation to teach these skills. I have seen the benefits of this program firsthand and will always believe that the Believe in Ohio program has made a difference in my students lives and my teaching career.

On behalf of the students in our state, I urge you to support Amendment SC2521X1 to Substitute House Bill 110 that continues funding of the Believe in Ohio Program.

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