

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Member of the Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding SB 178. Senator Reineke, thanks for the opportunity you have provided to participate today.

My name is Tim Ellenberger. I am a Founder and current Vice President of Business Development at Motion Controls Robotics in Fremont, OH. Our core business is providing flexible automation/robotic systems to manufacturers throughout North America and in a limited capacity outside of North America. We have been in business since 1995, employ just under 80 employees and have gross sales of approximately \$20 million. Our key employees are hands-on, technical people. Some have 2 year or 4 year post-secondary degrees. All have specific certificates or industry credentials that include mechanical, electrical, service and programming areas. We have been discussing the need for better educational opportunities and support for technical and related work force development programs for over 2 decades whenever we have a chance to.

Although I am here today representing MCRI, my other experiences over the last 20 years add first hand observation and experiences to todays discussion. I spent 8 years as an elected member of the Fremont City Schools Board of Education. I am currently a Trustee at Terra State Community College and a member of the board for the Sandusky County Board of DD. MCRI is active in educational, job opportunity, recruiting and mentoring programs with local students ranging from 4<sup>th</sup> grade through graduation and includes local Vocational/Career Tech Centers and Terra State Community College.

I am the poster child for work for development or non-traditional education. Having giving The Ohio State University no choice but to not invite me back after a couple years I went on to what was then Terra Technical College and received an associates degree. This was almost 40 years ago when 4 year bachelors degrees were the only real, supported and accepted path of success. I thrived at the technical college where education was provided by professors who came from industry to education.

Fast forward these 40 years and there is still little acceptance, support, marketing and funding for non-traditional education paths like work force development and technical or trades degrees and programs. Especially in the primary and secondary education levels.

Our local district, Fremont City Schools consists of a very diverse group of students and families. A large majority of these families are economically disadvantaged and qualify for free and reduced lunches. Yet we are compared to wealthy districts who have much different socio-economic make-up.

I would also include the educational programs and paths for Developmentally Disabled individuals who are lost in the current system. These students would benefit from oversight specifically of work force development and non-traditional programs. My wife taught in our local county school for 30 years. In her final years she was required to provide the alternative assessment to her students who were confined to wheelchairs, required services way beyond a traditional student, could not communicate verbally or with any devices. These students were lumped into the same mold of public education along with testing and other requirements of the top performing students.

With the continued loss of county schools, there are many students who could be learning life skills and work force skills that would lead to their success and happiness.

SB 178 will provide a great opportunity to serve each and every student including those who have been left behind for decades.