

Proponent Testimony for H.B. 33
House Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education
Tuesday, March 28th, 2023
Joshua Ferry, Student at Cleveland State University
The Ohio Student Association

Chairwoman Manning, Ranking Member Jarrells and members of the Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education

Thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony today. My name is Joshua Ferry. I am a student at Cleveland State and a resident of Lakewood. I'm also a member of the Ohio Student Association, a nonpartisan, statewide and grassroots organization led by college students across the state of Ohio.

On behalf of OSA, I am here to advocate for an increase in Governor DeWine's budget recommendation for higher education as part of HB 33. Both The Ohio Student Association and me as an individual fully support what Gov. DeWine and Chancellor Gardner have proposed for the fiscal year 2024-2025 budget, and their goal of expanding higher education. However, these proposals should only be the start, and this testimony will lay out a blueprint on how to move forward, specifically talking about the State Share of Information, and how expanding it will therefore expand access for those that face barriers.

In his proposal, Gov. DeWine proposed a 3% increase each year. While the governor's proposal is a step in the right direction, with inflation on the rise, it will not keep up with the current economic trends. We would like to see a larger increase, one that can expand the number of graduates with a postsecondary degree to 65%. One idea would be to reallocate the proposed \$40 million for students who face barriers into the SSI formula. This will make it less likely for the SSI funding to be reduced and will still be earmarked as helping students who face barriers since the SSI formula overlaps with barriers that many students face, and is able to counteract many of these barriers.

While I have not directly faced any barriers when it comes to higher education, there are unfortunately many students who do, and so while these changes won't help me directly, they

will help many others who face barriers. Regardless of race, social class, gender, disability, and county, everybody deserves the opportunity for a higher education without having to worry about financial barriers.

By making changes to the budget, among others, it makes Ohio a role model for other states to take the initiative of making higher education easier. Today I ask you to put people over party, and vote to amend HB 33. Any positive change to the education budget. These changes, to quote a famous Ohioan, would be “One step for man, one giant leap for mankind”

Thank you for your consideration