



**BEFORE THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
THE OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
REPRESENTATIVE JAY EDWARDS, CHAIR**

**HOUSE BILL 33
TESTIMONY OF LINN YOST
OWNER
MICRO MACHINE WORKS, INC.**

March 30, 2023

Chairman Edwards, Vice Chairman LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for allowing me to appear before you in support of House Bill 33. My name is Linn Yost and I am here today in my capacity as the owner of a manufacturing company, Micro Machine Works, Inc. headquartered in Washington County, and on behalf of The Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) to testify in support of provisions contained in the state operating budget proposal. I also serve as President of the Appalachian Ohio Manufacturers' Coalition (AOMC) and have worked in the manufacturing industry for nearly 50 years.

Every day, I take time away from my core business to build the manufacturing workforce in southeast Ohio and beyond. As the owner of a small business, it's up to me to make sure that the kids and families in my community know that there are good jobs in manufacturing. I do that by leading my local Industry Sector Partnership, by hosting school visits in my machine shop, and partnering with folks throughout the state to forge collaborative solutions. Still, I regularly have to go to West Virginia to get the training that I need for my employees. This is untenable.

The State of Ohio has played an instrumental role in manufacturing's workforce development transformation. To support Ohio's No. 1 industry and take advantage of the reshoring trend, Ohio must continue to invest in its talent. Upskilling manufacturing employees and attracting new workers to the industry are critical steps to increasing prosperity in our communities. As a manufacturer in Ohio, I see challenges in the state's workforce every day that we must address and the budget before you takes steps to significantly invest in meaningful solutions.

One of the key provisions we are looking to support in the proposed budget is the continued investment into Industry Sector Partnership grants. The Appalachian Ohio Manufacturers' Coalition is an Industry Sector Partnership that has been funded by this grant over the past several years and we urge the committee to continue this funding at the proposed level of \$7.5 million per fiscal year. Industry Sector Partnerships are regional networks of manufacturers who collaborate to address workforce challenges at the local level. This funding is particularly impactful to southeast Ohio, which often does not see the same level of investment as other regions of the state.

Another initiative contained in House Bill 33 is the TechCred program. At Micro Machine Works, we currently use TechCred to help our employees upskill and gain technology-focused credentials. This has been an important retention and cost-saving tool for my business and others as we modernize manufacturing workforce development. We request that the House maintain the funding for TechCred at the level in the proposed budget of over \$25 million per fiscal year.

The proposed budget also contains significant investments in career technical education. The unprecedented \$300 million proposed investment into our state's career technical centers for upgrades to facilities and purchases of new equipment would be truly transformational to students in Ohio as they would be able to train on modern equipment that they will encounter in the workplace.

To build upon the provisions already included in House Bill 33, the OMA is seeking support for a competitive manufacturing equipment grant, the Smart Technologies Assistance Program, which would help small to mid-sized manufacturers invest in the adoption and integration of smart technologies for their businesses. Following the lead of states like Iowa and Indiana, these grants would help manufacturers modernize and innovate their production processes and ensure Ohio keeps pace with evolving Industry 4.0 technology.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of this committee for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 33. I am happy to answer any questions that the committee may have.