



SENT VIA EMAIL TO REP94@OHIOHOUSE.GOV

June 19, 2024

The Honorable Jay Edwards, Chairman, House Finance Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Edwards and Members of the Finance Committee:

As the Chief Executive Officer of the Dan Beard Council, Boy Scouts of America, it is my pleasure to strongly support the proposed \$450,000 State of Ohio capital appropriations on behalf of the Skilled Trades Center in Miami Township (Clermont County) and the Scout Achievement Center in Evendale, Ohio (Hamilton County).

This funding is crucial to support the construction of a skilled trades education center and enhancements to the Scout Achievement Center. These initiatives are vital to addressing a significant workforce challenge: the gap in competitive employees entering the workforce to replace retiring baby boomers. Our region, like many others, is experiencing a severe shortage of skilled trades professionals. This shortage not only hampers economic growth but also limits opportunities for young individuals to pursue stable, rewarding careers. The proposed skilled trades education center is a timely and essential initiative that promises to address this critical issue head-on.

The Dan Beard Council, through its Scouting programs, has long been a pillar of youth development in our community. Scouting provides young people with invaluable experiences that build character, leadership, and practical skills. These programs have already made a substantial impact on preparing our youth for future careers, including those in skilled trades.

By establishing a dedicated skilled trades education center in Miami Township (Clermont County) and making overdue improvements at the Scout Achievement Center in the Village of Evendale (Hamilton County), the Dan Beard Council will significantly amplify its ability to train and inspire the next generation of our State's workforce. These facilities will offer hands-on learning opportunities and industry-standard training that are crucial for developing the competencies needed in today's job market. Moreover, they will serve as hubs for collaboration between educators, industry professionals, and community leaders, ensuring that training programs remain aligned with the evolving needs of the workforce.

The need for skilled trades professionals in our region is acute. As baby boomers retire, the gap between available jobs and qualified workers widens, creating a bottleneck that could

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stifle economic growth. Investing in the skilled trades education center will directly address this issue by providing a steady pipeline of well-trained, job-ready individuals who can step into these roles and contribute to our local economy. Additionally, the enhancements to the Scout Achievement Center will further bolster our efforts by providing a modern, equipped space for youth to develop the skills and knowledge necessary for future success.

The Dan Beard Council's commitment to youth development and career readiness is evident in its history and continued efforts. The new skilled trades education center will expand this mission, offering specialized training in areas such as electrical work, plumbing, carpentry, and more. These are not just jobs, but careers that provide stability and growth opportunities. By supporting this initiative, we are not only investing in the future of our youth but also in the economic stability and growth of our region.

In conclusion, the proposed capital appropriations for the Dan Beard Council will have a profound and lasting impact in Butler, Brown, Clermont, Hamilton & Warren counties. The construction of the skilled trades education center and enhancements to the Scout Achievement Center are necessary steps to ensure that we can meet the workforce demands of tomorrow. I urge you to support this critical funding request, which will help bridge the skills gap, empower our youth, and drive our local economy forward.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Andrew Zahn
Chief Executive Officer

cc. The Honorable Jean Schmidt, Representative, Ohio House District 62
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