



Testimony before the House Higher Education Committee
C. Todd Jones, President and General Counsel
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio

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Thank you Chairman Young and members of the House Higher Education Committee for allowing AICUO to submit written testimony on behalf of Ohio’s independent, nonprofit colleges and universities in support of House Bill (HB) 164.

AICUO represents 52 non-profit institutions of higher education across the state. Our members educate 134,000 students, and award one third of the baccalaureate degrees in Ohio each year, and an even higher share of our state’s degrees in mathematics, natural and biological sciences, and other key areas of study.

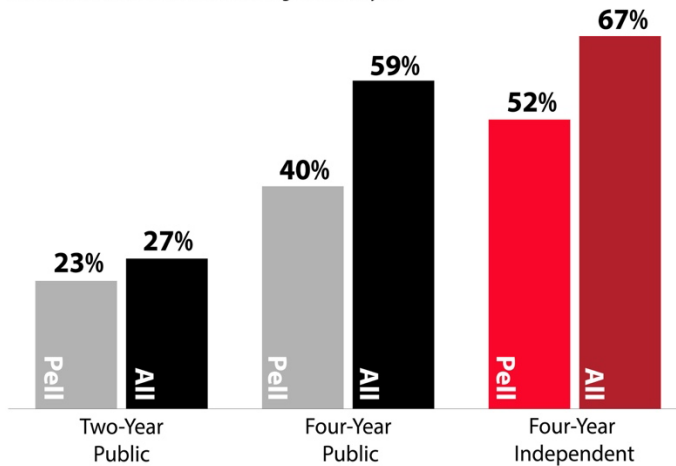
HB 164, introduced by Representatives Jarrells and Seitz, would help provide foster youth with access to quality higher education by awarding each qualifying student a foster-to-college scholarship based on the student’s financial need. Nationwide, less than five percent of youth raised in foster care graduate from a four-year college and only two to six percent complete a degree from a two-year college ([National Foster Youth Institute](#)). HB 164 joins 35 other states that offer similar scholarships to pave the way to increase foster youth student completion.



Who Graduates Ohio Pell Students Best? Independents

Pell students are 30% more likely to graduate at independent institutions than at publics

Ohio completion rates for degree programs by sector and all/Pell rates for the 2019 graduation year

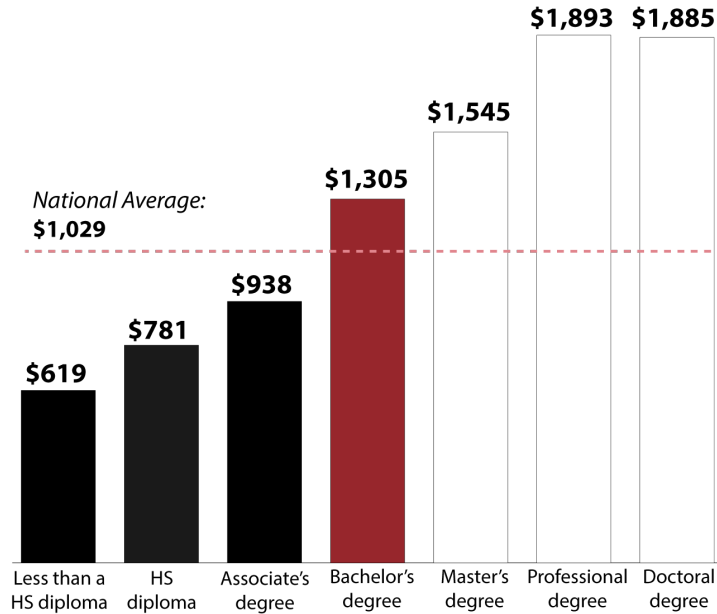


*Note: Completion after three years at two-year publics and six years at four-year public and independents
Source: IPEDS (2019 Graduation Year)*

AICUO members have the capacity and desire to graduate as many current and future students as possible, which will bring more economic growth to Ohio and build the state’s workforce pipeline. There is no doubt that post-secondary attainment is necessary. Ohio needs more of everything: more vocational training, more career-tech, more credentials, more associate degrees, more baccalaureate graduates, and more post-doctoral degrees. Ohio lags on all fronts and in this global economy, just having a high school diploma will not cut it.

Learn More, Earn More

Average weekly earnings in 2020 by educational attainment



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2020). *Education pays*.

HB 164 is crucial in empowering foster youth to break the cycle of limited opportunities and better support them in their pursuit of higher education. This small investment – one AICUO whole-heartedly supports – will lead to big outcomes and a brighter future for foster students today and for generations to come.

While our institutions do everything they can financially to assist those students in need, AICUO applauds Representative Jarrells and Seitz’s efforts to assist students that much more.