



## Proponent Testimony Regarding Senate Bill 104 Inter-University Council of Ohio

Chair Young, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Miller, and members of the House Higher Education Committee. My name is Laura Lanese, and I am the President and CEO of the Inter-University Council of Ohio (IUC). IUC submits this written proponent testimony regarding Senate Bill 104 (SB104) for the committee's consideration.

The IUC was established in 1939 as a voluntary educational association of Ohio's public universities. Today the association represents Ohio's 14 public universities. Together, these institutions offer a broad range of associate, baccalaureate, graduate, and professional programs. Ohio's public universities collectively contribute approximately \$67.8 billion to Ohio's economy.

We would like to thank Chair Cirino and Senator Brenner for working with our association on amendments to the bill that were accepted by the Senate on February 28. IUC was extremely grateful for the Senate's decision to maintain current law regarding textbook agreements under the College Credit Plus (CCP) program. We appreciate the bill sponsors' awareness of the fiscal challenges our institutions face in offering College Credit Plus courses to Ohio's secondary students. In addition to the significant tuition discount rate IUC universities offer as part of CCP, our universities also fully cover all the class and laboratory fees for these students. Additionally, there are significant indirect costs borne by our universities, such as academic advising, mental health care, tutoring, admissions help and library services. Because of these additional, and often substantial costs, we appreciate the bill sponsors' changes made to the textbook cost coverage.

We would also like to thank the bill sponsors and the Senate for their action to clarify the intent to participate language to clarify how students who complete their intent form by April 1 remain in the program for the following year as current law prescribes and the opportunity for students to submit their intent form by November 1. IUC recognizes that multiple intent deadlines promote greater access for students and the additional flexibility will allow universities to serve students throughout the entire academic calendar instead of just one time per year.

The bill before the committee's consideration made positive improvements on the alternative credentialing process to be established by the Chancellor. IUC very much appreciates the removal of the prohibition on graduate-level coursework language to provide the Chancellor the opportunity to collaborate with relevant stakeholders on making sure the credentialing process meets all the checks and balances.

In addition to sharing our support of the changes made, IUC has two minor requests pertaining to SB 104 and CCP. The first request to the committee is to consider inserting



language to align the start date of these changes with the 2025-2026 school year. In doing so, this would allow both K-12 and institutions of higher education to prepare for the new changes as prescribed under the bill. The second request is to have the legislature conduct a major study of College Credit Plus with stakeholders such as higher education, K-12, legislators, ODHE, and the Auditor of State's Office to analyze the success of the program in terms of student learning and degree attainment, savings to taxpayers, and overall efficacy of the program. This has not been done since the program's inception nearly a decade ago. Our goal is to provide Ohio students with the most affordable avenue to postsecondary education.

Ohio's public universities are essential to Ohio's economy and communities. IUC appreciates the committee's consideration of these policy aspects to the latest version of Senate Bill 104. Chair Young and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to submit written proponent testimony on behalf of IUC.