

**April 23, 2024**  
**Ohio House Primary and Secondary Education Committee**  
**Testimony for HB 432**  
**Tri-County Career Center**

Chair Bird, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson, and Members of the Ohio House Primary and Secondary Education Committee:

My name is Connie Altier, and I serve as the Superintendent of Tri-County Career Center located in Nelsonville, Ohio. I have overseen the institution's longstanding commitment to delivering comprehensive educational services to both high school and adult learners in Southeastern Ohio for over six years and have been in the district for 30 years. Tri-County Career Center facilitates 22 distinct career programs catering to students hailing from eight neighboring high schools. Notably, the center's student body is experiencing consistent growth, with enrollment expanding annually by a notable margin ranging between 40 to 60 students.

The exponential growth and heightened demand for our career programs present a notable challenge in recruiting Career Tech Teachers across our diverse career fields. I do not have a teaching applicant pool graduating each year from Ohio colleges. Consequently, when faced with teaching vacancies, our approach involves reaching out to our Advisory Committee members and former graduates for applicants. However, securing qualified career tech candidates possessing the requisite knowledge, skills, and experience often necessitates convincing them to commit up to four additional years obtaining a teaching license. This

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undertaking involves learning the particulars of our educational institution, instructional procedures, and the crucial art of effective teaching—a formidable task for individuals unfamiliar with educational pedagogy, such as those transitioning from careers like AEP Linemen after decades in the industry. I can find someone who is a master in the trade but it is not always easy to convince them that they now have to go to school and learn to teach.

Moreover, transitioning prospective teachers must grapple with significant financial adjustments, as teaching salaries typically fall short of those in technical fields. The educational transition further entails confronting unfamiliar terminology and completing timely college coursework, often requiring weekend or evening sessions and considerable travel to one of the limited institutions offering this specialized training in Ohio. This complex pathway extends even to licensed teachers in academic fields who choose to pursue a career tech teaching path, necessitating redundant coursework that revisits topics covered during undergraduate studies. The multifaceted challenges associated with recruiting and training career tech educators underscore the need for comprehensive support systems and targeted educational initiatives to bridge this critical gap in our workforce development efforts. I feel the language of HB 432 helps with these issues and supports Superintendents in our career tech centers.

I have worked very closely with some of our new career tech teachers with their college coursework to not only support them, but also gain firsthand knowledge of what is being asked of them. The coursework includes general knowledge, but it does not relate to my center, or the needs of my students. H.B. 432 would allow me to give them professional development that is more relevant and hopefully more relatable to their career field and students.

H.B. 432 introduces significant modifications to the process of obtaining

a career-technical license issued by the State Board of Education, aiming to enhance the recruitment of qualified instructors for Career Technical Education (CTE) programs. Notably, the bill enables individuals to directly apply for a license without requiring them to be employed by a school district (as under current law). These licenses obtained directly from the State Board will afford greater flexibility, allowing recipients to teach across multiple districts.

Under HB 432, prospective license applicants will still be able to enroll in a career-technical workforce development educator preparation program sanctioned by the Chancellor of Higher Education. This program will still include comprehensive coursework aligned with CTE and workforce development competencies—including focused instruction in teaching literacy within subject areas.

But in addition to this current licensure pathway, the legislation creates alternative district-sponsored options for applicants to secure a CTE teaching license. These new pathways will encompass tailored educator preparation programs within Lead Districts, offering concentrated coursework and local professional development opportunities. Alternatively, applicants may participate in a structured two-year alternative licensure program with mentorship provided by the employing district, incorporating personalized learning plans and professional development aligned with individual needs.

HB 432 empowers Career Tech Superintendents with enhanced recruitment strategies and provides educators with targeted professional development opportunities tailored to the unique demands of CTE instruction. By expanding pathways to licensure and fostering collaboration between educational institutions and employing districts, HB 432 facilitates the acquisition of highly qualified instructors vital to the success of CTE programs statewide. I urge and deeply appreciate your support for this important bill.