



Good Afternoon, Chairman Bird, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson, and Ohio House Primary and Secondary Education Committee members. My name is Jeff Berk, Career Tech Director for Mad River Local Schools outside of Dayton, and I am a member of the Ohio Association of Comprehensive and Compact Career Technical Schools, which represents 40 Compact and Comprehensive career-technical planning districts across the State.

I begin by sharing my thanks to Representative Jones for his efforts to expand the pool of teachers in the Career-Technical field through this bill. One of the most significant barriers to accessing career-technical education is staffing.

As a Career Tech Planning District, we face the same shortages as multiple in-demand industries. Where we once had 25 applicants for a Career Tech Instructor, we now only see 1-3 applicants. Most recently, I have experienced hiring struggles for our Engineering, Nursing, and Construction instructor positions. Under the current requirements, to become a fully licensed instructor, I have to ask our candidates not only to take a pay decrease but also to pay out-of-pocket expenses (around \$8,000) to return to college to complete the required 24 semester hours to get fully credentialed. Pressure on industries places extra pressure on us to compete with industry salaries, and we cannot do that.

House Bill 432 works to address these barriers in a variety of ways:

Allowing potential instructors to receive a license before they obtain a job through a CTPD.

- K-12 teachers will be eligible to become Career Tech instructors if they have the proper work experience as prescribed by CTE-36 (which is used to ensure that an individual who does not have a teaching license has the knowledge and skills needed to teach the career-technical education course successfully) and if they meet with a mentor once hired.

- Allowing potential instructors who do not have a teaching license but meet the work and experience requirements under CTE-36 to enroll in a University Program approved by the Ohio Department of Higher Education.

House Bill 432 additionally creates alternative pathways for instructors already hired by a CTPD – while maintaining the current licensure option requiring passage of an ODHE approved program.

- A 2-year alternative licensing program that allows the employing school district to provide a mentoring program—created by a Lead Career-Technical Planning Districts for the above mentioned CTE instructors.

- A teacher prep program created by the lead district that requires at least 9 college credit hours and 45 hours of local professional development.

It is also important to point out that HB 432 leaves the current university pathway untouched, only offering additional options through the Career Tech Planning Districts.

As we heard from Governor DeWine in his State of the State address, one of his priorities was to work with the General Assembly to “ensure no child who wants Career Tech is ever shut out because there simply is not room.” This bill helps ensure there are QUALIFIED career tech teachers in the field and with that, this bill works to remove barriers to access for students.

I would also be remiss if I did not take a moment to thank all members of the General Assembly for their incredible investments in career technical education through the budget process. With that I want to thank you all for your time and I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.