



April 23, 2024

The Honorable Adam Bird  
Chairman  
House Primary & Secondary Education Committee  
Ohio Statehouse  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, OH 43215

**RE: House Bill 432 – Written Proponent Testimony**

Dear Chairman Bird:

The Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) was created in 1910 with the mission to protect and grow Ohio manufacturing. Today, it has nearly 1,300 members representing the largest economic sector in the state, which contributed more than \$133 billion to Ohio's economy in 2023. According to the most recent data, nearly 700,000 Ohioans work in manufacturing, and manufacturing has the largest payroll of any Ohio economic sector.

The OMA has devoted significant resources to improving workforce development. To help ensure an adequate talent pipeline, manufacturers have embraced forward-thinking strategies, including industry sector partnerships (ISPs), workforce credentialing programs like TechCred, adoption of next-generation technology, new opportunities in career-technical education, and earn-and-learn programs.

However, employers in the state continue to cite talent availability as one of the biggest challenges they currently face. Sustained growth in the workforce pipeline will require efforts to further build up Ohio's career technical education programs. One of the factors contributing to the workforce shortage is an insufficient amount of career technical instructors to match the need for our state's growing demand in the manufacturing industry.

Manufacturers and their stakeholders have led the way in innovation to solve their talent challenges. Retaining our state's legacy as a manufacturing powerhouse means Ohio must continually innovate to grow a capable workforce. House Bill 432 is a step in the right direction to help ensure that Ohio's next generation of workers have access to critically important education programs that can assist them as they evaluate various in-demand career pathways such as manufacturing.

House Bill 432 would help address the shortage of career technical instructors by creating alternative licensure pathways. As Ohio's students explore career pathways to find the one that best suits them, our state must have enough qualified and engaged instructors to meet the growing demand for a skilled workforce.

Ohio manufacturers need public policies that protect the state's manufacturing advantage, and addressing workforce challenges is a critical component to the state's business climate. The OMA appreciates the leadership of the bill sponsor, Representative Don Jones, in introducing this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lindsey Short". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".

Lindsey Short  
Director, Public Policy Services  
The Ohio Manufacturers' Association