



Chairman Brenner, Vice-Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony in support of House Bill 432. My name is Keith Horner and I am superintendent of Apollo Career Center in Lima, OH.

Apollo Career Center serves school districts in four different counties and has 11 member schools. We have over 20 different high school career technical programs. Apollo also has a very robust adult education program that allows us to serve the needs of the community in many different workforce development ways.

We typically have openings for one or two career technical instructors each school year. For each of these open positions, we usually have a very limited number of applicants. This is due to a number of factors, including salary, but we also struggle with the current initial educator licensing and educator preparation program. H.B. 432 will help us to be more successful in putting an effective new teacher in the classroom – which is one of our most important jobs.

Permitting an individual to apply for an initial career-technical license instead of the employing school district will help streamline the licensure process. It would also allow the applicant more options/opportunities for employment and potentially increase our applicant pool.

Creating two alternative educator preparation programs will allow us the flexibility to choose a pathway appropriate for the individual. Currently, enrolling individuals into an appropriate program has not been easy. Some prospective teachers have also been deterred and/or intimidated by the university-based educator preparation program. While we have applicants for certain programs who would benefit from attending the traditional university-sponsored model, we have also had applicants where this has been an extreme barrier to their development, personal life or to their initial view of being an educator.

I have examples of how two new/potential educators would benefit from different pathways. One is our Multimedia instructor. He had seven years of experience and a college background. He fit nicely into the online model provided by one of our university partners. The second was a welder with 25 years of experience. He had a great desire to teach but had a negative experience in school. He found the enrollment process and delivery methods of the educator preparation model an insurmountable barrier. He did not take the job. H.B. 432 would provide us the flexibility to avoid some of these onboarding concerns.

It is in the best interest of individuals, communities, and employers to put the most effective teacher in the classroom. House Bill 432 will help by giving us flexibility in the career-technical workforce development licensure program.

I would like to thank the legislature for their continued support of workforce development and let you know that career centers are doing their part to try to work hard and fast to meet the needs of Ohio. Thank you for your time.