



**Senate Education Committee
HB 432 Proponent Testimony
Evan Calliccoat, Director of State Policy
November 12, 2024**

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Ingram, and other members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony regarding HB 432. The Ohio Farm Bureau has long supported career tech programs that allow young people to learn valuable life and professional skills that enable them to be a vital part of our state's workforce, as well as the teachers that help prepare them for this task. HB 432 will make it easier for those with career experience who wish to become educators to do so with increased flexibility and help fight the shortage of career tech teachers across our state.

As college tuition costs have continued to rise over the last few years, options outside of the postsecondary realm have become more popular both among students and those who may wish to hire them. 1 in 5 students in Ohio are now enrolled in some type of career-tech program, however many districts and their instructors are overwhelmed with only increasing student-to-teacher ratios. HB 432 will help alleviate this shortage by reducing the red tape for those interested in obtaining career-technical workforce development educator licenses. By allowing applicants to be the ones applying, rather than the superintendent of a district they may be hired in, applicants will no longer be limited to only that district when looking for jobs. In addition, it will allow applicants who have already received an offer of employment to enroll in alternative educator prep programs rather than a traditional classroom (university setting). This will allow both applicants and school districts to choose what would be best for them, giving much-needed flexibility that both are looking for. Career tech educators are often more than just teachers. They are life coaches and role models, they provide tools directly to our students that are frankly immeasurable.

I wouldn't be standing in front of you today if it wasn't for career tech education, or more specifically, my career tech educators. My FFA advisor/teacher was the one who first taught me how to write a speech, how to weld, how to market a product, and how to care for the community I live in. They prepared me for not only my career but prepared me to be a better person in my adult life. This is not an uncommon story that you would hear asking students who were involved in career tech. Eliminating barriers that will allow these types of teachers to reach more students will only increase the preparedness of our future workforce. I thank the Chairman and the committee again for the opportunity to testify today, and I'd be more than happy to answer any questions at this time.