



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 on House Bill 432. My name is Dr. Rick Smith and I serve as Superintendent of Ohio Hi-Point Career Center and President of the Ohio Association of Career Technical Superintendents.

Ohio Hi-Point Career Center serves five counties surrounding the Bellefontaine area, educating more than 600 students on our main campus. We also have satellite programs in our 14 partner school districts for 20 years and currently reach another 5,000 students with career technical education. We recently received the Governor's 5-Star Award for our report card. We appreciate your most recent equipment grant that will allow Ohio Hi-Point to open a cybersecurity program on our main campus and an IT coding pathway at Indian Lake Local Schools and Upper Scioto Valley Local Schools next year.

As Career Tech Planning Districts like Ohio Hi-Point continue to meet the state's goal of expanding access to career technical education in the deserts of Ohio that need workforce development, our leading challenge is finding workforce development or CTE teachers. I have personally seen and experienced the struggle to find CTE teachers sharply increase over the past few years. This is in part due to salary increases in the workforce, but it also deters potential teaching candidates when we explain the process to obtain their teaching license. HB 432 will allow us to help with the transition from industry to teaching. Teaching today is hard, and over the past few years I have witnessed losing new teachers within their first year. HB 432 provides new teachers and CTPD's options to get new teachers licensed and make the smoothest transition for an individual leaving an industry and into the teaching profession.

This bill also provides flexibility to individuals already in college with majors outside of education that may have a future interest in teaching and allow

them to take CTE courses without already being employed. We hope this will expand our pool of career tech teaching candidates in the future.

I hope you will move this bill forward and support its passing.

In conclusion, I thank you for the opportunity to share our support for this legislation from the field and from Ohio's career tech superintendents I represent.