



**Opponent Testimony Submitted to the Senate Finance Committee
Substitute House Bill 33
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Open Doors Academy
June 8, 2023**

Chair Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony on Substitute House Bill 33. My name is Dorothy Moulthrop, and I am the Chief Executive Officer of Open Doors Academy (ODA). ODA provides afterschool programs, summer camps, and year-round family engagement programming to kids and young adults across Northern and Central Ohio. We are not a school. We do not receive per pupil funding. ODA is based in Cleveland and serves more than 1,600 kids and families each year.

In the last budget, ODA was awarded \$2.3 million in TANF funds each fiscal year to support and grow our programming. As a result of this investment, five afterschool programs were added or expanded at Firelands Local Schools, Lima City Schools, Mansfield City Schools, and Sandusky City Schools. Today, ODA has 21 programs in 8 districts, and we continue to receive requests to open additional programs at schools in the districts we serve, as well as schools that would like to open new programs in other areas of the state.

I'm here to urge you to restore the \$2.8 million in TANF funds that were included in the House-passed version of the budget for ODA. Without this funding we will have to make the devastating decision to close programs.

The majority of our scholars are African American and come from low-income families- over 90% of our kids and families live at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. Many of our scholars' parents cannot afford childcare before and after school or during the summer. Our programs allow them to keep their jobs by providing a safe and reliable place for their children to continue learning beyond school hours.

A recent analysis of the impact of our program on scholars' grades at our programs in Mansfield, Lima, and Sandusky, and in Lorain County further demonstrates the success of this model. On average, 66% of our scholars improved in English/Language and 64% of scholars improved in Math from the first to third quarter of the 2022-2023 school year.

I urge you to restore ODA funding in the operating budget so that we can continue to work with children across Ohio to reach their full potential. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.