

The Ohio Academy of Science

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TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL WOYTEK, EXECUIVE DIRECTOR OHIO ACADEMY OF SCIENCE. IN SUPPORT OF RESTORING 381.410 LIA 235533

THURSDAY JUNE 8, 2023, 9:00 A.M. SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Chairman Dolan, Vice Chairman Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes and Members of the Finance Committee. Good morning. Thank you for the commendable work thus far on H.B. 33 as a statement to create a better Ohio. One item I would like to call to your attention today is Line Item 235533, with a request to restore funding that the House of Representatives had added to continue the Ohio Academy of Science's innovative science and STEM programs at \$1 million annually through FY24-FY25.

Now more than ever, STEM research, innovation, and entrepreneurial action are the pathways to prosperity in Ohio. Governor DeWine and this Legislature have provided for the future with the strong economic development work including the Intel project. The Ohio Academy of Science's STEM Research, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship programs and scholarships contained in LIA 235533 create a much-needed STEM talent pipeline necessary to attract and retain employers like this in Ohio.

For six of the last eight years through multiple Governors and General Assemblies, you have funded this line item to create an atmosphere of interest and excellence in STEM disciplines. The Academy's STEM and Entrepreneurship competition and Science Day are examples of the type of student-based support that these programs have provided. OAS supports these programs with significant private funding, so we are not asking for an appropriation that funds our whole program, but rather to allow us to work to match public support with private dollars.

Through this combined support, our total impact exceeds more than 150,000 students in grades 5-12 with roughly 13,000 of these students successfully completing OAS program requirements and becoming competition eligible. We support 600 schools statewide, including 57 schools on ODE's focus and/or priority list, and nearly 2,000 teachers have been impacted through aligned professional development or through direct program participation.

We have developed a strong digital infrastructure to support all student learners, this also includes access to project mentors and coaches. The goal is to not only build participation, but to improve project quality and student retention. These resources expand outreach and improve outcomes, while providing further emphasis on remote rural, urban, and historically marginalized communities.

The experiential programs contained in LIA 235533, allow students to apply what they are learning and the opportunity to solve problems that create social and economic

value. The development of these skills is the single-most important factor in attracting private dollars. Please allow us to lever the state's investment to meet Ohio's workforce needs.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, for all of these reasons, and the good news that Ohio's economy continues to impress, and new dollars are available, I would respectfully ask that in addition to all the good that you have done in the Senate version of the budget thus far, you add back funding for LI 235533. Our government affairs agent, Jim Trakas, will provide language to this Committee for your consideration.

Ohio's economy of today and tomorrow are dependent on STEM, literally. The workers of today and of tomorrow must possess the skills and knowledge that the Academy's programs offer. We are your partner in progress, and I do ask on behalf of all the school children, workers, and entrepreneurs who benefit from this reasonable funding request that you consider restoring funding for these STEM programs that are aligned to your priorities and the people of Ohio's.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony and I am glad to answer any questions that you may have.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT FROM PRIVATE DONORS WHOSE SUPPORT HELPS THIS PROGRAM KOKOSING CONSTRUCTION



6235 WESTERVILLE ROAD | WESTERVILLE OH 43081
PHONE 614.212.5700 | FAX 614.212.5711

Mr. Michael E. Woytek
Executive Director
The Ohio Academy of Science
5930 Wilcox Place, STE F
Dublin, Ohio 43016

February 9, 2023

Dear Mr. Woytek,

As a sponsor to The Ohio Academy of Science, Kokosing Inc. is writing a letter of support for you to share with the Ohio Legislature and the Governor's Office.

Kokosing is one of the largest family-owned construction companies in the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic. Kokosing is known for unwavering integrity, exceptional safety, and quality. Kokosing's primary business lines include industrial, heavy manufacturing, transportation, pipelines, water/wastewater, marine, renewable energy, along with construction material supply of aggregate and asphalt.

Kokosing believes making investments that improve the quality of life in the communities where we live and work is of the utmost importance. Kokosing believes that STEM programs enrich a child's learning experience and can help lead them to a career based on science, math, technology, or engineering.

By continuing sponsorship of STEM related education, Kokosing hopes to increase opportunities to achieve success in STEM related fields by increasing the number of programs that encourage youth to pursue careers in the field of engineering and construction management. Kokosing is proud to have team members who serve on and/or support advisory boards that focus on STEM and internship opportunities that increase diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

The programs offered by The Ohio Academy of Science have a direct impact for advancing STEM education for the future workforce of Ohio. By hosting events such as State Science Day, OAS is encouraging a culture of innovation and problem-solving skills that could have lasting impacts. Additionally, these programs create pathways to universities, colleges, and career technical centers.

We hope the Ohio Legislature and the Governor's Office will support the Ohio Academy of Science in the State of Ohio's 2024-25 Biennial Budget. The opportunity to combine public and private funding will lead to success for future generations.

Best Wishes,



Wm. Brett Burgett
President/Co-CEO
Kokosing, Inc.



Wm. Bryce Burgett
Co-CEO
Kokosing, Inc.

CHARLES RIVER

16 March 2023

Mr. Michael E. Woytek
Executive Director
The Ohio Academy of Science
5930 Wilcox Place, STE F
Dublin, Ohio 43016

Dear Mr. Woytek:

Charles River is a major sponsor of the Ohio Academy of Science and strongly supports your efforts to enhance STEM education throughout the State of Ohio. I am therefore writing this letter of support so that you can share this with the Governor's Office and the Ohio Legislature.

Charles River is the largest preclinical toxicology company in the world with three divisions located in Ohio (Spencerville, Ashland and Cleveland). Our research projects support the FDA drug development process and Charles River has conducted preclinical research on ~85% of the drugs approved by the FDA in 2021. Charles River is also the largest provider of research models globally.

Charles River is a strong supporter of STEM related education as students with science, engineering and math backgrounds are the basis of our global workforce and key to the development and testing of all new pharmaceutical products here in Ohio and across the globe. To this end, Charles River has been heavily involved in student outreach programs at High Schools including Tri-Star Vocational School, Kenton City Schools, Lima Senior Schools, and Spencerville

Schools. We have also provided programs to colleges such as OSU-Lima, OSU-Marion, Ohio Northern University, and Rhodes State College. Charles River is a strong believer that these outreach programs are critical, not only for the growth of pharmaceutical research, but also for the benefit of enriching children and providing them with career opportunities in science, math, technology, or engineering related fields.

The programs offered by the Ohio Academy of Science have an even greater impact on STEM education in Ohio by sponsoring events such as the State Science Day which allows students to learn basic scientific methods and research skills and teaches them how new discoveries occur. These experiences then create avenues for students to advance their education and knowledge at colleges and career centers that ultimately provide them with high paying careers in research and development.

It is our hope and desire that the Governor and Ohio Legislature will continue to strongly support the Ohio Academy of Science and the STEM programs that they support.

Sincerely,

Rusty E. Rush, M.S., DABT
General Manager
Charles River – Spencerville Ohio

UNIVERSITIES SPACE RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

Mr. Michael E. Woytek
Executive Director
The Ohio Academy of Science
5930 Wilcox Place, STE F
Dublin, OH 43015

February 15, 2023

Dear Mr. Woytek,

On behalf of the Universities Space Research Association (USRA), I am writing this letter to communicate our support for the Ohio Academy of Science (OAS) to request funding from the Governor's Office and Legislature, and inclusion in the State of Ohio's 2024-2025 Biennial Budget. As a nonprofit organization, USRA is tasked with advancing space science and technology, and our extensive portfolio of programs includes workforce development, intended to train and retain the next generation of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) professionals.

As you might be aware, USRA has a significant role in bringing over \$100M to Ohio through our participation in the development of a commercial space station, Starlab, and establishment of its terrestrial analog, the George Washington Carver Science Park (GWCSF), located at The Ohio State University. USRA recently submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation (NSF), with OAS as our core partner, entitled George Washington Carver Science Park Accelerator and Regional Catalyst (*SPARC Ohio*), which would augment current efforts to bring an additional \$160M to Ohio. *SPARC Ohio* will serve as the economic Engine to make Ohio the go-to destination for the booming space-based economy that brings the benefits of space R&D and manufacturing back to Earth. Projected cumulative impacts to Ohio through Year 10 include ~\$2B revenue and 6,500+ jobs, 3,150 students from underrepresented populations reached, and all 88 counties served with workforce development programs. Additional impacts include: 1) increased commercialization of new startup

businesses and growth of existing businesses; 2) increased availability of innovation-based, high-tech jobs; 3) expanded partnerships across commercial, academic, state, federal, and nonprofit organizations to help catalyze and sustain startups and the innovation ecosystem; 4) improved access to STEM education/training and startup-business opportunities within underrepresented communities; thus reducing disparities across STEM-based workforce; 5) growth in STEM education and improved public scientific literacy for diverse and underrepresented communities; and 6) enhanced infrastructure for R&D in areas vital to national security.

As a critical partner in this endeavor, OAS provided exemplary technical expertise to assure future educational programming broadly reaches K-12 students and educators at Title I schools throughout Ohio. Unquestionably, the exceptional efforts of OAS will make *SPARC Ohio* a cornerstone educational program that enhances STEM learning for populations historically underserved. *SPARC Ohio* encompasses approximately 30 other diverse partners and collaborators to create a thriving ecosystem across Ohio. Academia (Central State University, CWRU, OSU, AFIT, Ohio Space Grant Consortium, etc.) provide access to resources, knowledge, and a network of researchers. Industry (Intel, P&G, etc.) taps into university resources and knowledge, enabling technology commercialization and providing access to laboratories and manufacturing facilities. Nottingham Spirk provides expertise in product development and marketing. Government and non-profits (NASA Glenn Research Center, Air Force Research Laboratories, State of Ohio, Ohio Aerospace Institute, JobsOhio, MAGNET, etc.) provide access to research facilities, incentives for businesses and entrepreneurs, and access to state policy makers. Investors and accelerators (Starburst, gener8tor, Starlight and Primo Ventures) provide access to additional capital, mentorship and business advice, and resources to help grow new businesses. External and internal evaluation (EBHC and USRA) provide expertise in tracking metrics for continuous evaluation and strategy adjustments to ensure Engine success.

Annually, OAS impressively serves 579 total schools statewide, 1,458 Ohio educators, and more than 130k students (both directly and indirectly). Moreover, OAS has supported *Believe in Ohio* (through legislative appropriations) and *State Science Day* to provide experiential learning opportunities for students. Irrefutably, these expansive and impactful programs are not sustainable without continued funding from the State of Ohio. As such, I respectfully request that the Ohio Governor's Office and Legislature consider OAS, as the work performed is imperative to both economic prosperity and educational achievement in the future.

Please contact me directly with any questions related to this outstanding and well-deserving organization.

Best regards,



Dr. Carol L Kory
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