



May 8, 2023

To: Members of the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee

Re: HB 33 State Operating Budget for 24 & 25

Dear Ohio Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for your continued dedication to the success of Ohio's job creators and growth of our State. The Ohio General Assembly has displayed a commitment to build Ohio's workforce and ensure Ohioans have the skills necessary to pursue in-demand jobs. These efforts have propelled the workforce in the Buckeye State – but there is more work to be done, especially in the computing and technology field. The undersigned organizations have come together to advocate that the Ohio House and Senate maintain the Governor's efforts in the budget to advance and expand computer science access in our state.

The policies currently in the budget align with the recommendations that were published from the State Committee on Computer Science (SCCS). The SCCS was established by the General Assembly in the last operating budget (HB 110) and tasked state agencies, business leaders, institutions of higher education and computer science advocacy organizations with delivering actionable recommendations on how to increase access to computer science education. Ohio can become a leading state in computer science education and prepare our future generations for careers in a variety of industries by creating an Office of Computer Science Education, enacting "Ohio's CS Promise" which guarantees students have the opportunity to take at least one computer science class per year, and expanding teacher licensure and professional development in computer science education.

Recent economic development wins in our state highlight the growing need to have a workforce skilled in computer science and related fields. By implementing these policies, the State of Ohio will send a clear message to both job creators and young people that Ohio is ready to commit to the jobs of the future.

Inaction could jeopardize Ohio's ability to attract future economic development projects since the state is already facing a workforce shortage. In 2022, the state had an average of 18,000 computing jobs open each month with a median annual salary of \$86,642. Yet, there were only 1,842 computer science college graduates in 2019, which left many of these jobs unfilled.

The recommendations in the Governor's budget proposal will not only help build a workforce to fill these jobs but will also improve Ohio's national ranking of 34th in high schools who offer computer science courses. Currently, only 48% of Ohio's public schools offer any type of computer science course, including 57% of suburban districts and 55% of rural districts. Only 47 urban school districts offer computer science education. These statistics show the inequity and lack of K-12 computer science access across the state for all students.

Thank you again for your commitment to meeting Ohio's workforce needs and recognizing there is still more work to be done. Now is the time to invest in computer science access to help fill the jobs of today and the future. We look forward to continuing our collaboration to help the State of Ohio.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joe LaMantia".

Joseph LaMantia, CFPIM, CIRM, CPA
President and CEO