

Chairman Cirino :

My name is Paula Caso and I live in North Ridgeville although I teach in North Olmsted. I have been a resident of North Ridgeville for the last 21 years and have taught at North Olmsted High School for the last 31 years.

I have been a math and computer science teacher for all of those 31 years and have seen a terrible decline in the number of students taking computer science at my school. This past year I created 2 new courses (semester length) to try to improve the number of students taking computer science for the first time. Most of our students are not aware of what they can achieve with the knowledge and skills they acquire in my classes. Some take it just because they had me for a math class and I recommended it to them. Thankfully, many go on to take more and develop an interest in computer science and coding.

I know that my experience and ability to create courses, find materials at little or no cost to the district, and recruit students to take computer science has made me invaluable to my school. Most schools are not so fortunate. They need to recruit teachers who can become well-versed in computer science education so they can, in turn, recruit students to take coding and computer science classes. If we don't start bolstering our computer science educator workforce soon, Ohio will fall further and further behind in providing a workforce for a technology-based economy.

I believe it is critical that computer science funding is restored in the state operating budget at the level of \$24 million.

We need to fund the Computer Science Promise, which gives students the opportunity to take computer science courses for free if their school district does not offer them. Furthermore, we need TeachCS Grants in order to provide professional development for teachers in underserved school districts.

Ohio must increase the number of students participating in computer science related courses to meet the average demand of 18,000 computing jobs each month, with only 1,800 computer science college graduates every year. We cannot fill jobs in cybersecurity, a rapidly growing field within computer science, which directly impacts our national security.

Ohio is falling further behind neighboring states like Pennsylvania, Kentucky and Indiana that have funded computer science for years at an even higher rate than the \$24 million that we are urging you to support. Remaining behind other states and countries endangers our workforce and national security.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paula L. Caso". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paula L. Caso  
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