

Chair Fowler-Author, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsored testimony on HB62—a bill to address the rising and unsustainable costs of College Credit Plus (CCP) for rural school districts.

Since the pandemic, rural districts have seen CCP costs skyrocket, often matching or exceeding those of urban districts despite serving fewer students. Increased CCP enrollment is a positive trend, but for small rural schools, these rising costs are forcing difficult trade-offs in K-12 education. Schools should not have to choose between offering CCP and funding essential classroom needs. HB62 ensures CCP remains a sustainable, high-quality opportunity by implementing the following reforms:

1. **Fairer Online Course Rates** – Right now, online CCP courses are billed at the highest-tier rate, as if students were attending in-person on a college campus. But in reality, many students take these courses from their high school, using school computers, Wi-Fi, and support services. Our bill corrects this by adjusting online CCP costs to the second-tier rate, ensuring districts aren't overpaying for courses that rely on their own resources.
2. **Textbook Cost Sharing** – Many colleges require schools to purchase expensive new textbooks each year, even when low-cost or reusable options exist. This is a major burden for districts. Our bill requires colleges to share in textbook costs and encourages the use of free or low-cost open-source materials. If you've ever had to buy the "14th edition" of a textbook with only minor changes, you know how unnecessary these costs can be. Schools and taxpayers should not be forced to foot that bill year after year.
3. **Encouraging Local CCP Enrollment** – Ohio has invested in credentialing high school teachers to teach CCP courses, yet current policy still pushes students to take those same courses at outside colleges, at a much higher cost. HB62 prioritizes local CCP participation, keeping students engaged in their home schools while saving districts money. It makes no sense to pay more for a course that can be taken at a lower cost with the same academic standards.
4. **University Attendance Notification** – Schools and parents often don't find out when a student stops attending a CCP course, leading to failing grades and wasted tuition dollars. HB62 requires universities to notify school districts when a student stops attending, ensuring accountability and early intervention. This is a simple fix that prevents unnecessary financial and academic consequences.

These reforms build on efforts first introduced by Speaker Matt Huffman in 2017. HB62 continues that work by creating a fairer funding model, protecting K-12 resources, and keeping CCP viable for all students—without unnecessary costs to taxpayers or districts.

HB62 keeps more money in our schools, lowers costs for families, strengthens local education, and improves transparency. It ensures CCP remains an opportunity, not a financial burden.

I appreciate the committee's time and want to thank my joint sponsor, Representative Bird, for his leadership on these important reforms. I look forward to your support and welcome any questions.