



**Written Testimony of Laura Lanese  
Opponent of House Bill 62  
Before the House Education Committee  
April 8, 2025**

Chair Fowler Arthur, Vice Chair Odioso, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony as an opponent to House Bill 62 (HB 62). My name is Laura Lanese, and I serve as President and CEO of the Inter-University Council of Ohio (IUC). Established in 1939, the IUC represents Ohio's 14 public universities, which together educate hundreds of thousands of students and drive innovation across the state.

While the IUC appreciates the intent of this legislation—to expand higher education access and affordability through the College Credit Plus (CCP) program—IUC members have significant concerns about the bill's financial and operational impact on public universities. To be clear, IUC members support CCP and are proud to partner with school districts to expand access to higher education. According to the Ohio Department of Higher Education's report on the CCP program for the 2022-2023 academic year, more than 80,000 students participated in CCP.<sup>1</sup>

According to the report, nearly 25% of these students (19,269) enrolled in CCP courses offered by a public university main or branch campus during the 2022-2023 academic year either in person, online, or at their secondary school. Of the 52,778 courses attempted by these students at public universities, 50,099 courses were completed. This 94.2% completion rate translates to 153,504 credits earned at Ohio's public universities during one academic year.

While these numbers are laudable, the administration of CCP presents a financial challenge to many public universities. Currently, IUC institutions fully cover all the class and laboratory fees for participating CCP students. Other significant indirect costs borne by public universities include, academic advising, mental health care, tutoring, admissions help, and library services.

It is the view of the IUC that, as written, HB 62 would further exacerbate these challenges by shifting additional CCP programming costs toward public universities, jeopardizing instructional quality, and threatening the ongoing financial stability of the CCP program.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://highered.ohio.gov/data-reports/data-and-reports-sa/reports/2023-ccp-annual-report>

HB 62 imposes a new cost-sharing structure for instructional materials in CCP courses. Specifically, if open-source textbooks are available but not selected, colleges and universities would be required to cover 100% of textbook costs. If no open-source options exist, institutions must cover 50% of textbook costs, with the remaining cost falling to the student's secondary school.

Shifting these costs to institutions of higher education—many of which are absorbing high volumes of CCP students—will strain limited operating budgets, particularly for regional and rural campuses that serve large dual-enrollment populations. These provisions penalize institutions for prioritizing academic quality in their course materials.

While Open Educational Resources (OERs) offer potential cost savings for students, this is still a developing field with uneven quality and limited availability in many subjects. Many higher education courses require up-to-date, peer-reviewed, or multi-platformed materials that are not available through open-source platforms. The bill's preference for open-source materials, though well-meaning, may inadvertently apply pressure to standardize or lower the quality of instructional materials in pursuit of cost savings.

This cost burden will be most prevalent in courses where open-source textbook options do not exist or would not be academically appropriate. Many college-level courses—particularly in science, technology, business, and health fields—require proprietary or licensed materials that are aligned with accreditation standards and professional outcomes. These in-demand fields also come with higher instructional costs for the use of high-tech laboratories, equipment, and other materials. Moreover, faculty need flexibility to choose from a wide array of instructional materials that ensure academic rigor and relevance. Put bluntly, a one-size-fits-all approach risks compromising educational quality.

In recognizing that physical textbooks are prone to frequent publisher updates and can cause logistical storage issues for secondary schools, the IUC believes that access to various modes of educational resources should not be limited for students. A 2024 survey from Bay View Analytics found that while most professors believe online educational resources offer students greater flexibility, nearly half of those professors believe students learn better with print materials.<sup>2</sup> Additional studies have shown that some students learn better and comprehend more with print textbooks.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, HB 62's proposed changes to the course payment structure and increased institutional cost-sharing pose an even greater threat to the financial sustainability of the CCP

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/tech-innovation/digital-publishing/2024/09/05/report-professors-believe-print-textbooks-are>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.govtech.com/education/k-12/books-vs-screens-what-does-the-latest-research-say>

program. As written, HB 62 proposes reducing the payment for online CCP courses to the lesser of \$83 per credit hour (50% of the current default ceiling) or the institution's standard rate. For courses taken on a college campus that are also available at the student's secondary school, the payment would be set at \$42 per credit hour. This adjustment could result in up to a 75% reduction in payments for such courses.

Fiscal analysis prepared by the LSC shows that these changes to the program's payment structure could result in more than \$29 million in CCP program costs being shifted to institutions of higher education.<sup>4</sup> Preliminary modeling suggests these provisions could cost some public universities over \$1 million annually. Should HB 62 pass as written, institutions may be forced to scale back CCP offerings, undermining the very goals this legislation seeks to achieve.

Ohio's public universities remain committed to providing high-quality, college-level opportunities to high school students across the state through the CCP program. It is in that spirit that the IUC respectfully requests the General Assembly consider conducting a major study of CCP with relevant stakeholders such as institutions of higher education, K-12 administrators, legislators, the Ohio Department of Higher Education, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, and the Auditor of State's Office to analyze the success of the program in terms of student learning, degree attainment, savings to taxpayers, and overall efficacy of the program. This has not been done since the program's inception nearly a decade ago. A comprehensive stakeholder-driven review could help the General Assembly modernize CCP for the next decade—ensuring accountability, transparency, and sustainable funding for all partners involved.

To conclude, the IUC urges the committee to consider how the passage of HB 62 as written would affect the quality and quantity of students participating in the CCP program. As it did in the last General Assembly, the IUC is ready to work collaboratively with legislators to find ways to strengthen and sustain CCP for future generations of Ohio students without jeopardizing the core missions or financial stability of Ohio's public universities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony in opposition to HB 62 as written. I would be happy to answer any questions or discuss my testimony in greater detail at your convenience.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/download?key=24979>