



## Ohio House Finance Committee

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Tiffany Hallman

Girl Scout Councils of Ohio

**Trailblazers in Training: Preparing Girls for Tomorrow's Workforce**



**Chair Stewart, Vice Chair Dovilla, Ranking Member Sweeney and Members of the Committee,**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Girl Scout Councils of Ohio. My name is Tiffany Hallman and I am the Chief Development and Marketing Officer with Girl Scouts of Western Ohio.

I am here today to share how Girl Scouts are uniquely positioned to help address Ohio's workforce readiness challenges by equipping girls, particularly those from underserved communities, with essential leadership, confidence, and career-readiness skills.

### **About Girl Scouts in Ohio**

Girl Scouts is the largest leadership development program for girls in grades K-12. Through our evidence-based curriculum, we provide girls with skills that prepare them for academic and career success.

Our research-backed approach fosters:

**Confidence and Leadership:** Encouraging self-motivation and the ability to lead.

**Ethical Decision-Making:** Instilling responsibility, integrity, and respect.

**Resilience and Problem-Solving:** Helping girls adapt to challenges and take appropriate risks.

**Effective Communication and Collaboration:** Building healthy relationships and strong interpersonal skills.

**Community Engagement and Initiative:** Preparing girls to identify and solve problems in their communities.

### **The Need for Workforce Readiness Programming**

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce emphasizes the need for whole-child development, recognizing that mentorship and non-academic support are critical in closing achievement gaps. Research confirms that leadership and soft skills are as crucial to workforce readiness as technical skills. While our mission is not specifically to improve academic performance, studies show that Girl Scouts outperform their peers in school and career preparedness.

Currently, Girl Scout Councils of Ohio serve nearly 63,000 girls statewide, yet participation among girls from underserved communities remains disproportionately low. To bridge this gap, we have set a strategic goal to align membership demographics with Ohio's population, with a focus on STEM and in-demand workforce skills.

### **Trailblazers in Training: A Workforce Readiness Solution**

Building upon a successful pilot program launched by Girl Scouts of Northeast Ohio in 2024 and 2025 with state support, we propose scaling the **Trailblazers in Training Leadership Program** statewide.

This initiative will expand our efforts to provide direct support to girls in underserved communities through staff-led troops, addressing barriers such as limited adult volunteers due to work schedules and financial constraints.

Through this program, we will:

**Recruit underserved girls and volunteers,** creating at least 40 new troops across Ohio.

**Establish sustainable troop infrastructure** in libraries, community centers, and places of worship.

**Develop long-term mentoring relationships** to support career and life skill development.

## **Proven Impact**

The pilot program exceeded its recruitment target by 135% in its first year, serving over 115 girls.

### *Key outcomes include:*

74% of participants demonstrated increased confidence and leadership.

68% exhibited ethical decision-making and personal responsibility.

43% improved their problem-solving and resilience.

44% increased community engagement and initiative.

54% expressed interest in STEM careers.

Expanding this program statewide will ensure more girls develop critical skills to contribute meaningfully to Ohio's workforce and economic growth.

## **State Budget Request**

To support this expansion, we respectfully request **\$800,000 per fiscal year** from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. These funds will support staffing, program development, and administration for two years, ensuring at least 40 new troops are established in underserved communities.

This investment will help ensure that all Ohio girls, regardless of socioeconomic background, have access to the skills, mentorship, and opportunities necessary to become future leaders in education, business, and their communities.

## **Conclusion**

Investing in Girl Scouts is an investment in Ohio's future workforce. We urge your support in expanding this program to ensure more girls develop the skills necessary for success in the modern workforce.

**Thank you for your time and consideration.** We welcome any questions and look forward to working together to support Ohio's future leaders.

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