



**House Bill 100**  
**House Ways & Means Committee**  
**Anne Richards, CEO of Goodwill of Greater Cleveland and East Central Ohio**  
**on behalf of**  
**Ohio Association of Goodwill Industries**  
**April 9, 2025**

Chairman Roemer, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Troy, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today on behalf of the Ohio Association of Goodwill Industries (OAGI). My name is Anne Richards, and I am the President and CEO of Goodwill of Greater Cleveland and East Central Ohio and current board Chair for Goodwill Industries International. My organization is headquartered in Canton and serves eight counties in Northeast Ohio including Stark, Cuyahoga, Lake, Geauga, Carroll, Tuscarawas, Harrison and Jefferson counties.

OAGI is comprised of 14 autonomous Goodwill organizations that empower people with disabilities and other disadvantages, which can include those with mental illness, criminal history, homelessness, or veterans, to achieve financial independence and a better quality of life that a job can provide.

In 2024, Ohio Goodwills placed nearly 4,500 people into competitive employment through partnerships with local employers. Goodwills assisted another 96,000 Ohioans through a comprehensive array of employment programs, including assistance writing a resume, training in digital literacy and certifications for in-demand jobs, assessing job skills, and job placements.

Goodwills already support the needs of thousands of individuals in our communities, but there is much more we could do with additional resources. I ask for your support of this bill to create a new program through the Department of Development by which nonprofit organizations that sell donated goods could apply for a grant to create or expand job training and job placement programs for individuals with barriers to employment. Based on legislation that has passed in Kentucky and Louisiana, I'd like to thank Representatives Santucci and Rogers for their support of this proposal.

At Goodwill Industries of Greater Cleveland and East Central Ohio, we offer 30 programs that served more than 22,000 individuals last year. Our workforce programs focus on providing essential skills to individuals with disabilities, returning citizens, veterans, and youth that prepare them for work and careers. Goodwill's programs go beyond providing resume assistance and interviewing skills to provide an individualized plan for skill building and support with a focus on improving quality of life for the people we serve. In recent years we have heard from employers who would like assistance supporting their incumbent workforce by providing financial literacy, skill-building, and supportive services to increase workforce retention. We recently launched a program with Aultman Hospital in Canton called Prosperity to Work. With this program, we help remove barriers to work for Aultman Hospital employees. In 2024, 34 people were served through this program and provided services to assist them with maintaining employment.



Goodwill would utilize grant funds to expand this program and partner with other employers in the communities we serve.

Other examples of ways communities could utilize grant funds include:

- Expanding recovery employment programs. Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley partners with the Montgomery County ADAMHS Board to provide job readiness training, industry-recognized credentials, and certified peer recovery support to individuals in various stages of recovery. Last year they served over 850 people and placed over 380 into employment. The retention rate of employment for those served through this program showed consistency and many individuals are reaching 1 year+ in their current jobs.
- Helping veterans transition into stable employment. Veterans face significant barriers when re-entering the workforce including a lack reliable transportation, gaps in employment history that make securing work more difficult, and the need for job certifications or licensure to qualify for stable careers. Ohio Valley Goodwill addresses these challenges head-on through their Veteran Employment Program, which provided services to 263 veterans last year. Among the services provided by this program are resume building, career coaching, interview preparation, financial assistance for professional licensure and certification costs, and connections to local veteran-friendly employers that are looking for qualified candidates. In 2024, this program helped to place 169 veterans into employment across a wide range of industries.

As I mentioned earlier, Goodwill's programs go beyond simply helping a person with applying for jobs and job placement. We work with people on an individual basis to ensure that they have the skills necessary to find success in the workforce. Goodwill provides wraparound support that focuses on addressing barriers to employment before placement and after placement. People served by our programs can remain engaged long after their placement to ensure that obstacles that lead to unemployment are overcome and to provide support and assistance as the person moves toward the next steps in their career.

At Goodwill, we know that when people learn skills to earn their own paychecks, they have the power to transform lives and communities. Please support this bill, which will allow us, and other workforce agencies to expand these essential services and connect more individuals with the power of work. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.