

Siya Patel
Anderson High School Student
Support for Junior Achievement
May 14, 2025

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chairman Blessing, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee. Thank you for allowing me to offer remarks today.

My name is Siya Patel and I am a student at Anderson High School in the Forest Hills School District. I am here today to ask the Senate to support Junior Achievement funding in House Bill 96. This funding is critical to expanding JA's impact across all 88 counties in Ohio, ensuring that every student—regardless of their location—has access to essential resources that empower them to create actionable career plans and contribute meaningfully to Ohio's workforce.

I would like to take a few minutes to explain why Junior Achievement has had such a significant impact on my life. First, Junior Achievement offers educational programs that focus on financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and work readiness, helping students develop the skills for their economic success, many of which I have directly benefited from.

Through my school district, I had the opportunity to participate in one of Junior Achievement's signature programs called JA Innovation Generation Entrepreneurial Program. This program is a real-world entrepreneurship program that allows students to learn the mindset and skills needed for future entrepreneurs.

Through JA Innovation Generation Entrepreneurial, my classmates and I were able to develop a Hybrid Vertical Axis Wind Turbine to help address energy shortages in Ohio. Our product combines existing wind energy technologies with an innovative design that we are currently working to patent, making it more efficient and adaptable to a wider range of wind conditions in downtown areas.

JA has been instrumental not only in helping us build a solid business plan and sharpen our pitch, but also in giving us access to funding, business connections, and real-world opportunities that have helped us break through the financial constraints. Through these resources, we've been able to build and test a working prototype, collect performance data, and connect with professionals who are helping us navigate the path from prototype to market-ready product.

Because of the wide range of resources from Junior Achievement, this project has received national recognition through major science competitions. Junior Achievement hasn't just prepared us for entrepreneurship—it's given us the tools, network, and confidence to make a tangible product.

This is why the funding currently in HB 96 is needed. The \$1.25M per fiscal year would allow JA to expand these invaluable programs statewide, reaching more students and ensuring that every young person in Ohio has access to the resources, mentorship, and experiences needed to achieve career success. By supporting the funding provided in HB 96, you are not just funding programs, you are investing in the future leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators of Ohio.

This investment will pay dividends for Ohio's economy by preparing the next generation of skilled professionals and business leaders.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate the opportunity to speak.