March 2, 2026

Senator Andy Brenner
Chair, Ohio Senate Education Committee
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215

Chair Brenner,

On behalf of the nearly 21,000 members of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) in Ohio, we appreciate the opportunity to express our support for Senate Bill 328, legislation aimed at strengthening Ohio's workforce readiness.

For reference, NFIB is a small business trade association founded over 80 years ago that is dedicated to representing the interests of small and independent businesses across our state and nation. NFIB's mission is to promote the right of our members to own, operate and grow their businesses. NFIB members come from all industry sectors and each of the 88 counties across Ohio. Our average member has 15 or fewer employees and has less than $2 million in annual gross receipts.

Small businesses in Ohio continue to report finding qualified labor as a top issue year after year. Ohio has created many programs aimed at workforce development and career exploration, however, we lack the ability to see which programs are creating the most return on investment (ROI). SB 328 will create the ROI initiative, aimed at allowing state agencies that oversee Ohio's many workforce programs, in collaboration with stakeholders, to analyze what they are seeing and issue reports including a high school graduate report, a talent gap report, and others. This will allow the state to identify which programs are delivering the best results for students and employers.

Creating opportunities for students to have earlier exposure to different careers allows for greater development and career exploration. Roughly one out of three students enter the workforce after high school, and so the earlier a student can start to plan their pathway the better. Senate Bill 328 will allow students in the eighth grade to start receiving hands on learning for in demand careers, as well as financial and life planning. Studies have shown the earlier a student can begin to plan for their future, the greater the chances of them having a successful life and career after schooling.

We appreciate Senate Koehler for sponsoring this important legislation, as Senate Bill 328 is a meaningful step towards enhancing student outcomes, and solving a workforce need for Ohio employers.

We urge the committee to support this legislation and please feel free to contact me at Jacob.Flowers@nfib.org if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jacob Flowers
Assistant State Director