

Chairman Cirino, Vice Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee. I am offering this written testimony in support of proposed Amendment SCO521 to House Substitute Bill 96 to support funding for The Ohio Academy of Science.

My name is Brynn McGrail from Delaware, Ohio and a current student at the University of Cincinnati pursuing a degree in Environmental Engineering. Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for the Ohio Academy of Science programing.

The Ohio Academy of Science and accompanying programs like Science Day and Ohio STEP (formerly “Believe in Ohio”) undoubtedly changed the trajectory of my academics, career goals, and interest in STEM. I graduated high school with the confidence in my ability to pursue research projects, and approach them with curiosity, innovation, and adaptability – things fostered in my early days with the Ohio Academy of Science.

I was grateful to receive scholarships through Science Days and Ohio STEP that has financially supported me in college, especially while attending an Ohio university.

I got to compete in the International Science and Engineering Fair in 2021, meeting students from other countries to talk about our STEM projects. Now, I work with international researchers and organizations while on my internships at various Department of Energy national laboratories. I am thankful for the exposure to the broad science community that Science Day gave me and other Ohio students.

Participating in these programs give students so much more than a classroom can provide. The hands-on formulation of a question all the way to communicating results and thinking of what comes next is invaluable. I learned what the real work of science looks like – the mess-ups, the successes, networking, presenting, and so much more.

The future of students, like me, who participate in the Ohio Academy of Science is promising and we need them now more than ever. We need to invest in the future scientists of Ohio.

It is evident that the Ohio Academy of Science is the heart of that foundation, so I am pleading you to approve the proposed Amendment SCO521 to House Substitute Bill 96.

Thank you,

Brynn McGrail