



Chairman Cirino, Vice-Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify before you today in support of House Bill 96. My name is Ryan Augsburger, and I serve as president of the Ohio Manufacturers' Association.

The OMA represents a community of 1,300 manufacturers across the state of Ohio working together to protect and grow Ohio's manufacturing industry.

I am testifying today to voice our organization's support for critical workforce development funding, important considerations on energy policy, and opportunities to enhance Ohio's Manufacturing Supply chain with support to Ohio's small and medium sized manufacturers.

Ohio Manufacturers' Association WorkAdvance Statewide Workforce Development Program Training Ohio's SNAP and Underemployed Population

I will start off with the most pressing matter for manufacturers, which continues to be Workforce Development. Attracting and retaining talent remains a major challenge for Ohio manufacturers, especially in technician roles—making it more important than ever to strengthen workforce pipelines beyond traditional degree pathways. To address this, the industry is investing in training partnerships, upskilling programs, and earlier career exposure.

To build an effective pipeline, employer collaboration at the regional level is essential. The Ohio Manufacturers' Association has established 19 Industry Sector Partnerships across the state and is implementing WorkAdvance—a proven, employer-led workforce model that connects individuals on government assistance, including the SNAP population, with long-term, careers in manufacturing.

Since 2023, WorkAdvance has helped manufacturers tap into underutilized talent—such as underemployed Ohioans, SNAP recipients, and returning citizens—through industry-aligned training, soft skills development, technical instruction, and coaching that continues up to 12 months after job placement to support retention and advancement.



Importantly, this is not solely a government-funded program. Ohio manufacturers are investing their own dollars into WorkAdvance, demonstrating strong private-sector commitment and confidence in the model's effectiveness.

And it's already working. The program has trained 1,884 Ohioans at a 100% credential attainment rate and placed more than 1,428 in manufacturing jobs—a 79% completion to placement rate.

Now is the time to scale WorkAdvance statewide. The OMA is requesting \$2.5 million in GRF, along with \$500,000 per year in matching federal SNAP Employment & Training funds. This investment will expand access, enable 1,000 new job placements, and deliver life-changing careers for Ohioans while providing manufacturers with the skilled workforce they urgently need.

It will reduce per-participant costs by scaling across multiple Industry Sector Partnerships (ISPs), and integrate WorkAdvance into Ohio's long-term workforce funding models (WIOA, state workforce grants, private partnerships) for sustainability.

The amendment language is attached to today's testimony. Thank you for your time and continued support.

Support for Governor and House's Workforce Provisions – Industry Sector Partnerships, Tech Cred, Middle School Career Tech Expansion:

In addition to including WorkAdvance funding, we are asking the Senate to retain key programs included in both the Governor's and the House's proposed budget.

First, we support ongoing funding for TechCred, which enables employers to help workers earn technology-focused credentials. This is vital as manufacturing continues to modernize and evolve.

Second, continued investment in Industry Sector Partnerships through the Ohio Department of Development is essential. These partnerships allow manufacturers to collaborate with educators and workforce organizations to align training with



local needs. They're a proven strategy that helps employers build effective talent pipelines

Lastly, we support House Bill 96's removal of a waiver that allows school districts to opt out of career technical education in middle school. This change would expand access to career tech to over 200 additional districts and help build early awareness and interest in technical careers.

Remove Utility Ownership of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

Another topic of interest to Ohio manufacturers is affordable and reliable energy, which is integral to the productivity of these manufacturers. The legislature recently passed a comprehensive energy bill, House Bill 15, with near-unanimous support to promote competitive generation. That bill specified that electric distribution utilities could not own generation in the state of Ohio.

Unfortunately, some language was added in the most recent version of the budget allowing utilities to own what should be a competitive product regarding electric vehicle charging. The language added allows for either electric distribution utility ownership of EV chargers, or utility construction of "make ready" infrastructure for EV chargers, under certain circumstances.

The intention of ensuring adequate infrastructure in Ohio's rural areas at this later date is laudable, however, EV charging stations are in a competitive, rapidly maturing market and there is no reason to allow utility ownership of charging stations, saddling captive customers with costs.

Manufacturing Technology Assistance Program

Our final request is for the Senate to include an amendment to create the Manufacturing Technology Assistance Program (MTAP)—a \$12 million initiative to help manufacturers with fewer than 500 employees access up to \$150,000 in grants for equipment upgrades and smart technology integration. This concept is being carried by Representatives Santucci and Demetriou through House Bill 159.

Small and mid-sized manufacturers make up 90% of Ohio's manufacturing job growth and are essential to our state's economic future. MTAP will support these



businesses by driving innovation, improving operations, and sustaining high-paying jobs.

Modeled after successful programs in Iowa and Indiana, and delivered in partnership with Manufacturing Extension Partnerships (MEPs), MTAP ensures companies have the tools and expert support needed to compete globally.

Members of the Committee, thank you for your time today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Am. Sub. H. B. No. 96
As Passed by the House

_____ moved to amend as follows:

In the table on line 133525, in row F, delete "\$53,216,226	1
\$53,216,226" and insert "\$53,716,226 \$53,716,226"	2
In the table on line 133525, in row I, delete "\$1,500,000	3
\$1,500,000" and insert "\$3,500,000 \$3,500,000"	4
In the table on line 133525, in row M, add \$2,500,000 to each fiscal	5
year	6
In the table on line 133525, in row AN, delete "\$353,577,548	7
\$355,477,007" and insert "\$354,077,548 \$355,977,007"	8
In the table on line 133525, in row BD, add \$500,000 to each fiscal	9
year	10
In the table on line 133525, in row BE, add \$3,000,000 to each	11
fiscal year	12
In line 133824, delete "JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES PROGRAM SUPPORT" and	13
insert "LA SOUPE"	14
In line 133825, delete "The" and insert "Of the"	15
In line 133826, after "Support," insert "\$1,500,000 in each fiscal	16
year"	17

After line 133827, insert: 18

"Section 307.116. WORKADVANCE PROGRAM 19

Of the foregoing appropriation item 600551, Job and Family 20
 Services Program Support, \$2,000,000 in each fiscal year shall 21
 be provided to the statewide association of not less than one 22
 thousand members serving exclusively manufacturing industry 23
 workforce services in the state of Ohio to expand its 24
 WorkAdvance initiative and increase recruiting, training, and 25
 career support for the manufacturing industry. 26

Of the foregoing appropriation items 600521, Family 27
 Assistance - Local, and 600610, Food Assistance Programs, up to 28
 \$500,000 in each appropriation item in each fiscal year shall be 29
 provided to the statewide association of not less than one 30
 thousand members serving exclusively manufacturing industry 31
 workforce services in the state of Ohio. These funds shall be 32
 used to provide services to participants of the SNAP Employment 33
 and Training Program." 34

The motion was _____ agreed to.

SYNOPSIS 35

Department of Job and Family Services 36

Sections 307.10, 307.115, and 307.116 37

Increases GRF ALI 600551, Job and Family Services Program 38
 Support, by \$2,000,000 in each fiscal year and earmarks funds to 39
 support the statewide association of not less than one thousand 40

members serving exclusively manufacturing industry workforce 41
services in the state of Ohio and the WorkAdvance initiative. 42

Increases both GRF ALI 600521, Family Assistance - Local, 43
and Fund 3840 ALI 600610, Food Assistance Programs, by \$500,000 44
in each fiscal year. Earmarks up to \$500,000 from each of these 45
line items for the statewide association of not less than one 46
thousand members serving exclusively manufacturing industry 47
workforce services in the state of Ohio and the WorkAdvance 48
initiative. Requires funds be used to provide services to 49
participants of the SNAP Employment and Training Program. 50