



June 4, 2025

Senate Finance Committee

Ohio Statehouse

Columbus, OH

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

On behalf of the Department of Engineering Technology at Miami University, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of restoring funding for Tech Prep Regional Centers under the Career Technical Enhancements line item 200545.

As a dedicated post-secondary partner to the Southwest Region Tech Prep Center, we have seen firsthand the vital role these centers play in bridging the gap between secondary and post-secondary education to meet the evolving needs of students and employers across Ohio. We respectfully urge the committee to restore full funding to \$9.6 million, as introduced in the Executive Budget and passed by the House.

Tech Prep Regional Centers are foundational to Ohio's career and technical education infrastructure. At the university level, and particularly in applied engineering programs like ours, Tech Prep serves as a catalyst for:

- Supporting articulation and dual credit agreements
- Facilitating CTAG alignment and seamless transfer pathways
- Promoting successful student transitions from high school to college
- Coordinating employer engagement and work-based learning initiatives
- Enabling responsive programming aligned to emerging workforce needs

In the Engineering Technology Department at Miami University, Tech Prep has been instrumental in advancing our workforce development mission. Through this partnership, we have launched high-impact pathway programs, expanded access to early college credit in advanced manufacturing and automation, and deepened our collaborations with regional employers to prepare students for in-demand careers in smart manufacturing, robotics, and industrial automation.

We understand that the Senate version of the budget proposes to expand the responsibilities of the Tech Prep network, including realignment to a seventh region to align with JobsOhio's structure. While we support this strategic vision and the potential for broader statewide impact, we believe it must be accompanied by appropriate funding. A \$1.3 million increase is insufficient to support this expanded mission without risking the quality of current services.

If Ohio is to continue developing seamless, student-centered pathways from high school to college to high-wage careers, Tech Prep must be properly resourced. We strongly urge the Senate Finance Committee to restore the full \$9.6 million in funding for the Tech Prep Regional Centers to sustain and grow this critical work.

Thank you for your consideration and for your ongoing investment in Ohio's students and workforce.

Sincerely,

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