

On behalf of Zane State College, 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.

Zane State College has been a long-standing post-secondary partner to our Central Region Tech Prep Center. We have seen firsthand the critical role these centers play in aligning secondary and post-secondary education to meet the needs of students and employers across Ohio. Zane State and Tech Prep have enjoyed a healthy and robust partnership – one that reduces waste, fraud and abuse by closing the gap between services and eliminating redundancy. Tech Prep is the model of efficiency for education in Ohio. Every penny spent on Tech Prep streamlines regional efforts to serve students and serve workforce needs. Tech Prep is the thread that weaves together the efforts of all the individual educational partners in the State of 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 a cornerstone of Ohio's CTE infrastructure, serving as connectors, conveners, and collaborators across sectors. At the community college level, Tech Prep plays a vital role in:

- Supporting **articulation and dual credit agreements**
- Facilitating **CTAG and career pathway alignment**
- Encouraging student transitions from high school to college
- Coordinating **work-based learning** and employer engagement
- Helping us respond to emerging workforce needs with greater speed and cohesion

Tech Prep's proven record of building high-quality partnerships and adapting to the evolving education and workforce landscape has made them **an indispensable asset to our institutions**. Their support strengthens our ability to enroll, retain, and graduate students who are better prepared for careers in high-demand fields.

We understand the Senate version proposes to expand the responsibilities of the Tech Prep network, including the realignment to a 7th region to match the JobsOhio structure. While we fully support this vision and the growth it represents, it must come with an appropriate investment. A **\$1.3 million increase is insufficient** to support this expanded mission **without compromising the high-quality services already being delivered**.



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If we hope to continue building seamless, student-centered pathways that lead from high school to college to career, Tech Prep must be properly resourced to do this work.

We urge the Senate Finance Committee to **restore the full \$9.6 million** in funding for the Tech Prep Regional Centers so we can continue providing Ohio students with clear, supported, and successful transitions into higher education and the workforce.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued investment in Ohio's future.

Sincerely,
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