



**Written Interested Party Testimony of David M. Anderson, Ph.D., Senior Advisor, Government
Relations, The Washington Center
Ohio Senate Higher Education
Committee
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Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Timken, and Ranking Member Ingram, it is a privilege to provide written interested party testimony on behalf of The Washington Center.

My name is David Anderson. I am Senior Advisor for Government Relations, Office of the President, at The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars. I take additional pride in working with the state legislature in Ohio. Although I am a native of New Jersey, my first job out of graduate school was a Visiting Assistant Professor position in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Cincinnati, where I taught ethics, political philosophy, and other courses for two years. I thus have some of the Buckeye State in my DNA.

The Washington Center has partnered with the State of Ohio for over 25 years. Students from public and private colleges and universities receive state scholarships to participate in our workforce readiness programs. We have enrolled over 2,200 students with state scholarships since the partnership began. The Washington Center is located in Washington, D.C. and was founded in 1975. We are the largest independent, nonprofit experiential education organization in the United States. In our five decades, The Washington Center has ably adapted and evolved its internship and career-connected experiential learning model, centering access and opportunity for students and meeting the needs of employers.

The Washington Center has played a crucial role in helping students achieve career readiness by connecting motivated students with companies, organizations, congressional offices, and federal agencies that exemplify the values of leadership and community service. Nearly all students who participate in our internship program receive academic credit for their semester or summer term in Washington D.C., as we have cooperative agreements with several hundred colleges and universities throughout the United States including 24 affiliations in Ohio. After our program, students return to their home states and become vibrant, contributing members of their state's economy.

We are the bridge between higher education and professional careers— leveraging all of what D.C. has to offer in order to provide dynamic, experiential learning opportunities to empower and motivate young people to become engaged citizens and productive professionals in their early careers.

In our Academic Internship Program, students intern four days per week at one of the many private companies, nonprofit organizations, congressional offices, and federal agencies with whom we partner. The students also take an evening course one night per week and are afforded additional career-connected learning workshops to ensure they are prepared to enter the professional workforce with the career-connected professional skills that employers most desire in early career talent.

In 2023, the Department of Higher Education provided approval to increase the award amount for our internship program for Ohio students to \$5,000 from \$2,300 (fall and spring) and \$4,000 (summer). Additionally, The Washington Center provides a \$1,000 matching scholarship to be awarded to students who receive the \$5,000 Ohio scholarship and who choose to reside in Washington Center-provided housing. Thus, in-residence students are receiving a total of \$6,000 of combined Ohio and TWC funds as of the current spring semester.



When Ohio students come to Washington, they head back to Ohio with business capital, political capital, and civic capital. Our research and outcomes show that students who participate in-person, virtually, or in hybrid modes from Ohio have developed the knowledge, skills, and connections that will assist in building their careers. It's a powerful model that works.

Additionally, students now have the flexibility to utilize scholarship funding to access The Washington Center's short-term programs (STPs). These programs afford students the opportunity to access TWC's career readiness and workforce development curriculum while immersing themselves in Washington, D.C. and interacting with students from around the country, without sacrificing an entire semester at their home school. This flexibility opens up opportunities for more students to get real-world experience that will help prepare them for their chosen careers after college. In FY 2024, we had seven short-term programs, ranging from cybersecurity and AI to national security, career skill boot camp to healthcare management and policy. This year, we will offer nine programs ranging from three days to seven days in length that are industry focused or career-connected skills based to better prepare students for their professional early careers.

In Ohio, the public universities that have sent us students in the last ten years include: Bowling Green State University, University of Cincinnati, The Ohio State University, University of Toledo, Miami University, Wright State University, and Youngstown State University.

The private colleges and universities that have sent us students in the last ten years include: Baldwin Wallace University, Capital University, Case Western Reserve University, Denison University, Hiram College, John Carroll University, Marietta College, Ohio Dominican University, Ohio Northern University, The University of Findlay, Tiffin University, University of Dayton, University of Mount Union, Walsh University, and Xavier University.

In FY24, we enrolled 24 Ohio students; and in FY23 we enrolled 29 Ohio students. In FY23 and FY24, TWC's enrollment was 83% private university students and 17% public university students. In FY25, we project to enroll 44 students and utilize most of the funding awarded for The Washington Center.

We are asking the state legislature for \$150,000 per year in the FY26-27 biennium budget for a total of \$300,000. This funding is used to administer scholarships to Ohio students who enroll in The Washington Center program. With a \$150,000 appropriation for each of the next two years, we expect approximately 40 to 45 students each year for an approximate total of 90 students. This appropriation helps to expand the program to more Ohio students and gives these students access to a wide network of internship opportunities.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony to the Ohio Senate Higher Education Committee. We are proud of our relationship with the state of Ohio and Ohio's public and private colleges and universities and hope to continue to bolster skills for Ohio's economic future. Thank you for your past support of The Washington Center and consideration of this appropriation request.