

Testimony before the Ohio Senate Transportation Committee
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At COTA, we act as an extension of the region's economic development arm, providing daily access to jobs, healthcare and education for our customers. We believe that public transit is a tool for workforce development and economic mobility. Knowing that the Columbus Region is estimated to grow by one million people by 2050, the reinstatement of the Ohio Workforce Mobility Partnership Program is even more important.

The Ohio Workforce Mobility Partnership Program provides essential funding across the state that helps transit agencies address the unique workforce transportation challenges in our communities. COTA has been a grateful beneficiary of these grant funds during the past biennium, winning dollars to construct our Mobility Center at Rickenbacker, complete workforce transportation analysis from Dublin to Newark, enhance transit stops amenities near employment centers and coming this May, the restoration of late-night service, an essential need for shift workers.

I want to quickly go back to our Mobility Center at Rickenbacker. Located less than two miles from the Rickenbacker Airport, this innovative mobility center will provide greater access to public transit, allowing for critical workforce connections from various regional shuttles, including the Groveport Rickenbacker Employee Access Transit (GREAT) shuttle and transit services in both Fairfield and Pickaway counties to COTA fixed route lines. Projects like this are happening across the state with help from the Ohio Workforce Mobility Partnership Program.

As Ohio continues to attract historic investment to our state, we must ensure our public transit providers are able to meet the needs of the growing workforce. We must be able to connect workers to these jobs because these announcements are all only buildings without the workforce to fill them.

