



Representative Niraj Antani
42nd House District

Sponsor Testimony House Bill 429
Economic and Workforce Development Committee
January 27, 2016

Chair Baker, Vice-Chairman Romanchuk, Ranking Member Smith, and Members of the Economic and Workforce Development Committee, thank you for allowing Representative Reineke and I to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 429, which would allow automotive technicians and motor vehicle technicians at retail stores the opportunity to participate in the Incumbent Workforce Voucher Program.

The Incumbent Workforce Training Voucher Program is administered by the Ohio Development Services Agency and provides much needed training dollars to Ohio's incumbent workforce for development. It is a popular and effective program, having used all of its dollars in past fiscal years. There have been \$7.5 million allocated in FY 16 and FY 17 each.

The Incumbent Workforce Voucher Program currently covers individuals and businesses in a variety of targeted industries, including the automotive industry and its technicians at automotive manufacturers; however, it does not include automotive technicians employed in retail stores such as auto dealerships, Goodyear, NTB, and independently owned car mechanic shops. House Bill 429 would give these retail businesses, and their employers, the opportunity to apply for the program to advance their skills and career. The ability for these incumbent to advance their career and be promoted, would then create the ability for more entry level automotive technicians to be hired. The Department of Jobs and Family Services lists automotive technicians as one of the in-demand occupations.

It is important to note, House Bill 429 does not call for additional money to DSA for the training program, but rather it allows technicians who previously didn't qualify, apply for money already available. This bill would help to fill the current skills gap for automotive technicians and prepare the existing workforce to grow and meet future demands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 429. Representative Reineke will further discuss the need for this bill, and then we would be happy to take any questions.