

Testimony by  
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In support of GRF 200597 as part of H.B. 64

Education Program Support

*FIRST* (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology)

My name is Maria Krantz. I am a junior at Metro Early College High School and am currently the Project Manager/Team Lead of FRC team 3324, the Metrobots. This is my third year on the team. *FIRST* has supported my development into a better student, learner and person overall. The skills taught through *FIRST* are numerous; each challenge prompts collaboration, communication, active decision-making, critical thinking, and inquiry. These skills have not only guided me throughout my high school career, but also success in a college lecture hall, as well as in any setting in which a challenge is presented. The knowledge, skill, and expertise gained from my experience on an FRC team are irreplaceable and an opportunity I would hope every student may encounter.

When I initially began attending robotics after school during the fall of my freshman year, I had no idea what to expect; I thought I was simply joining an academics-based extra-curricular. Instead, I was pleasantly surprised to find myself challenged with authentic STEM tasks that fused sports-like competition with technical, robotic mechanisms. However, I soon realized that this was not all *FIRST* offered. Participation on a *FIRST* team educates students on technical skills such as programming, electrical/wiring, mechanical building, and design in collaboration with business strategy, such as marketing, fundraising and outreach. In addition to the STEM assets gained through *FIRST*, I have also participated in community service and outreach, fostering a broader, more accurate view of the world through multiple lenses. I have not only gained a great deal of confidence throughout my experience on a *FIRST* team, but also an array of skills, implemented through the real-world application of STEM based challenges.

Within the last three years, I have been challenged with tasks I thought impossible to overcome. I have pushed the boundaries of my education and strived to be successful within every aspect of my life. When I faced a daunting assignment, instead of backing away, I accept the challenge and work tirelessly to perform to my greatest ability. I have set high goals for myself, and focus on these goals until I have followed through. I strongly believe that these acts and traits are directly influenced by the habits I have gained through *FIRST*, skills that will carry with me throughout, not only the remainder of my education, but in my everyday life. These skills have enabled me to become a confident student, impacting my future through the assets learned. This confidence, skill, and experience that I have gained through *FIRST* is something that I hope every student may have the opportunity of developing. Through the undeniable benefits of the authentic learning experience that *FIRST* provides, I enthusiastically support the passage of GRF 200597 associated with House Bill 64.