



# UNITED Equipment Dealers Association

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May 18, 2016

Senator Frank LaRose, Chair  
Senate Transportation, Commerce & Labor Committee  
Ohio Statehouse  
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: HB 429, Incumbent Workforce Training Voucher Program

On behalf of our members throughout Ohio, we urge you to support expanding the scope of HB 429, legislation to include workers employed as automotive and motor vehicle technicians in the Incumbent Workforce Training Voucher Program.

The United Equipment Dealers Association represents more than 750 farm, construction, and outdoor power equipment dealership locations throughout our trade area with nearly 500 of them located in Ohio. Each of our equipment dealer-members has highly-skilled technicians who play a vital role in serving the agribusiness community and contractors in Ohio's transportation infrastructure sector. In addition, many of our dealer-members support commercial landscapers and lawn care specialists as well as consumers who have their own lawn and garden equipment.

The technicians our members employ must continually upgrade their skills and knowledge to maintain and provide the necessary repairs to keep their customers' equipment in peak operating order. From EPA-mandated environmental standards (eg, Tier III and Tier IV engines), and electronic advances in integrated telematics hardware to precision agriculture equipment utilizing GPS systems and issues with increased ethanol content in gasoline-powered off-road vehicles (eg, E-15, E-85), the technicians serving our industry sectors are essential in keeping Ohio's economy healthy. Without them, their customers' equipment would no longer be in working order to harvest crops, tend livestock, build and repair roads, or even cut grass.

I believe that by adding automotive and motor vehicle repair technicians, HB 429 is consistent with the program's goals of allowing employers to retain and grow their existing Ohio workforce. It also helps create a statewide workforce that can meet the technological and economic challenges ahead. I also believe HB 429 is consistent with the program's goal of limiting the available funds to skilled employees in technical jobs.

As stated above, the technicians servicing Ohio's agricultural, construction, and outdoor power equipment need ongoing training. Most equipment manufacturers require that our dealership technicians receive annual training sessions – at the dealer's expense. I know that workforce development initiatives like the Incumbent Workforce Training Voucher Program will help to offset these large, but essential costs.

Please vote to pass HB 429 this session. Thank you.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "L. Kim Rominger".

L. Kim Rominger  
CEO/Executive Vice President

cc: Members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce & Labor Committee