



Director Lydia L. Mihalik
Ohio Department of Development
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Chairman Fraizer, Vice Chair Hall, and Ranking Member Lightbody, and members of the House Technology and Innovation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on Innovation Districts. My name is Lydia Mihalik, and I am the Director of the Ohio Department of Development.

Innovation Districts demonstrate what is possible through strong public and private sector partnerships. Our strategy utilizes each partners' strengths to build community assets and accelerate economic development. And we believe these investments will keep Ohio as a world leader for medical and health care innovation.

Innovation Districts are about the advancement of innovation, investment and economic prosperity in Ohio – now and for the future. The technologies developed at the institutions involved in these districts will generate new businesses and job opportunities throughout the surrounding region. Communities across Ohio will capitalize on this positive economic impact.

By engaging our colleges and universities in the districts, we establish a talent pipeline for the businesses engaged in the districts and the companies that will spin out from our research institutions. The districts foster an environment for entrepreneurship and creativity for students and professors. We believe these districts will generate life changing technology in the healthcare and biomedical research. Technology that can be produced by Ohio companies and Ohio workers. Innovation districts also will create a pipeline of new Ohio-based companies.

The DeWine-Husted Administration's role in Innovation Districts is to function as champion, convener, and catalyst.

Governor DeWine and Lt. Governor Husted have championed the vision to make Ohio the worldwide leader in health care and medical technology innovation. They convened the research institutions and private sector partners, garnering commitments to invest. And they catalyzed the innovation districts with the initial financial investments through JobsOhio and the Ohio Department of Development.

The Department of Development provided a \$100 million direct loan to the Cleveland Clinic to support its new Global Center for Pathogen Research and Human Health. The Columbus and Cincinnati Innovation Districts are supported by JobsOhio.

Ohio is in a competition for talent and innovation. Cities like Chicago, Nashville, and Austin are doing all they can to attract talented professionals. To keep innovators and bright talents at home in Ohio, we need to make places for them.

If you look at the cities that compete for talent around the world, they are doubling-down on sectors where they already lead:

Silicon Valley is the technology innovation district that built upon the computer boom of the 1980s. North Carolina's Raleigh-Durham region has been renowned since the 1980s for advanced research, but in the past decade they moved a master plan to develop "Research Triangle Park" as its own Innovation District. Detroit, which understands this concept in the automotive sector, itself has a new downtown "Center for Innovation" focused on tech and entrepreneurship. These are just a few examples of the increasing competition for talent.

It is time to build on our reputation as a leader in the health care sector. The Cleveland Clinic, Ohio State Wexner Medical Center, and the University of Cincinnati Medical Center are just some of the names that join the lists of the world's best hospitals. We owe it to ourselves to keep Ohio at the forefront of global innovation when it comes to health care.

Ohio's investment in Innovation Districts act as magnets to attract talent, innovation, and business development. Innovation Districts will become economic engines spinning off companies that will create jobs for Ohioans, and strengthen our communities. I am excited about the opportunities these districts will provide in the coming years.

Thank you for your time today. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.