

Honorable Mike Duffey
Chair, House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee
77 S. High St.
Columbus, OH 43215

Chair Duffey, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Sweeney and Members of the House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee,

My name is Marcia Hood, I am Youth Coordinator at the Harvard Community Services Center and Founder of the neighborhood youth organization See You At The Top!! As you can see by my positions I spend a lot of time with young people and I have a sincere vested interest in their exposure, interest, surroundings, safety, education and opportunities. I take a lot of time with our young people and most importantly I LISTEN to them. I relish in their accomplishments and I feel their sadness and hopelessness as we all deal with the Public Health issue of Violence. I strongly support education and higher education and it gives me great pride to see our young people reach that accomplishment however that sometimes hits a brick wall when they cannot find a job. I frequently hear my young people say things like if I only had my own money, I don't have anything to do this summer, what's the point, why bother, I'm bored.....we have so many young people that are in this position and to have an opportunity to work, to be a paid intern, a trainee, a chance to learn a trade not only during the summer but in creative programming job partnerships during the year could be the difference in not only changing their lives but also saving their lives.

We sincerely need to take a look at what we are not doing to help this initiative and make it happen. A change needs to happen now.