



**Ohio House Finance Committee  
State Operating Budget (HB 33)  
April 20, 2023**

**Testimony of the Career-Technical Education Associations  
(Ohio ACTE, OACTS, Ohio CCS)  
Connie Altier, Superintendent, Tri-County Career Center**

Chair Edwards, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the Ohio House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Connie Altier, Superintendent of Tri-County Career Center, and I am speaking on behalf my school, as well as the state's 89 career technical schools—including its 49 Joint Vocational School Districts (JVSDs), 24 comprehensives & 16 compacts—all of which are represented by the Ohio Association for Career Technical Education (Ohio ACTE), the Ohio Association of Career Technical Superintendents (OACTS), and the Ohio Association of Comprehensive and Compact Career Technical Schools (Ohio CCS).

Tri-County Career Center is located in Nelsonville, Ohio and serves eight districts across three counties. We have 22 high school programs and have seen substantial growth over the last three to five years as the advantages of Career Technical Education become more evident to our region. Tri-County is also a thriving (adult ed.) OTC, serving adults in four counties with programs focusing on Industry Credentials and workforce ready skills. We have worked with over twenty businesses for customized training programs and many community and local stakeholders. Through strong long-standing partnerships with business and industry, students are offered internships, apprenticeships, and employment opportunities that benefit the local community as well as the state and regional economy.

We appreciate many of the additions and revisions House members have made to the state's operating budget bill, including adjusting the Fair School Funding Plan to reflect 2022 salary input data and allocating additional dollars to adult education and short term certificate programs. However, I am testifying today to express concern regarding the Sub Bill's reduction in funding for the As Introduced Career-Technical Construction Program (See Sub Bill -3, Line 154527). Although the sub bill maintains funding for the program, it reduces the allocation by \$100M over the biennium (50% reduction).

For context, note that our Associations—including each of the state's 89 career-technical planning districts—have pursued a data-driven approach to assessing the levels of funding necessary to expand our capacity in a meaningful way and serve more career-tech students across Ohio. As many CTE administrators have emphasized in recent months, a clear barrier to the growth of our programs and centers is our limited building space. CTE facility-related needs are comparatively significant given the extensive area necessary to conduct training across numerous different career-technical programs—all of which require large equipment and space for hands on training. The cost associated with any capital project (new build, addition or renovation) is consistently high, and historically our schools have received limited funding through the traditional

OFCC process (nor did career centers receive any Federal ESSR funds post-COVID). My building is 55 years old, I have never qualified for OFCC funds. The construction dollars will allow me expansion that I would otherwise not be able to afford. I currently, have eight programs that are oversubscribed. These funds would help me serve those students.

To ensure a thoughtful approach to this issue, over the last several months our Associations collected information and engaged in many hours of discussion regarding a possible funding and allocation process for targeted facility projects designed to grow in-demand CTE programs. I have participated in many meetings to ensure the funds would be spent to increase services to our students. We have learned that although the initial \$200M would not be enough to expand all CTE schools, it should produce a meaningful impact and help us serve more students in each area of the state. A 50% reduction in funding would not produce the same outcome.

Many of our CTE schools have shovel ready building construction projects that will ensure these dollars are immediately put to good use to address our state's rapidly evolving workforce needs. Our economy is in an exciting, rapid period of growth and transition; we would not recommend reducing funding for the proposed Career-Technical Construction Program at such a pivotal juncture. We urge the Committee and other House members to restore this allocation in an effort to grow career-tech for the benefit of Ohio's economy, and current and future workforce.

Thanks again for the opportunity to share my thoughts. I would be happy to answer any questions.