

Ohio House Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education
Proponent Testimony
HB 33 – Biennial Operating Budget

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Chair Manning, Ranking Member Jarrells and members of the Ohio House Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education, I am Melissa Gilliam, executive vice president and provost of The Ohio State University. I appreciate the opportunity to present written proponent testimony to the committee on HB 33, the state's biennial operating budget.

We are grateful for the existing state support we receive and for your consideration of the resources we are requesting in the current operating budget. The resources invested by the state have an immediate and direct impact on students and their families. Ohio State has a deep commitment to access and affordability, providing more than \$200 million in student financial aid each year out of university funds, which is in addition to federal and state resources. Below are several initiatives Ohio State administers each year to make college more affordable for students and families:

- The Buckeye Opportunity Program, a \$200 million student financial aid initiative created in 2018-2019 out of university funds that covers any gap in the cost of tuition and general fees for Pell-eligible, in-state students.
- The President's Affordability Grant program, established in 2015, provides up to \$2,250 to approximately 15,000 low- and moderate-income Ohio students annually.
- The Ohio State University started its undergraduate tuition-guarantee program in 2017. Ohio undergraduate students and their families now have certainty for tuition, general fees, and room and board as they attend the university. Prior to the guarantee program being implemented, Ohio State had frozen in-state tuition from the 2012-2013 academic year through the 2017-2018 academic year.

Thanks to the programs like the ones mentioned above, I am pleased to share the percentage of undergraduate students graduating with debt has declined from 55% of our student population five years ago to 47% in 2019-2020.

Governor DeWine, Chancellor Gardner, and the General Assembly are to be commended for Ohio's strong support of higher education. HB 33 provides an excellent framework for Ohio higher education in FY24 and FY25. I respectfully request that the legislature maintain the current levels of funding in the following higher education line items, and further request targeted increases in a few strategic areas.

- State Share of Instruction (SSI) – This line item is the main source of state support to state-assisted colleges and universities for operating costs associated with instruction. I thank the Governor for his proposal to increase funds for SSI by 3.0% in FY24 and by an additional 3.0% in FY25. With inflation rates of 4.7% and 8.0% in calendar years 2021 and 2022, respectively, the 3.0% increase in SSI is critically important to maintain accessibility for our students.
- Ohio College Opportunity Grant (OCOG) – OCOG is Ohio’s main need-based aid program. HB 33 contains more than \$230 million dollars in additional funding across the biennium and significantly expands the program to support middle-income families. Beginning in fall 2023, all new freshmen at four-year colleges, whose families have an approximate adjusted gross income of \$87,000 or less, will be OCOG-eligible. This historic investment in OCOG means that more students and families will be able to use this form of financial aid. I strongly support the proposed levels of funding for OCOG in HB 33.
- Cooperative Extension – Ohio State University Extension provides services, in partnership with all 88 counties, as part of our land-grant university mission. Program areas include agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth programs, and family and consumer science. Extension receives just enough resources to meet the needs of current programming and will remain at capacity with the current levels of funding included in the budget. With additional strategic investments in this line item, Extension will move beyond simply meeting needs and, instead, extend into new program areas and services sought by our local partners.
- Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC) – OARDC is the research operation of Ohio State’s College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences. As another component of our land-grant mission, OARDC enables Ohio’s farms and agricultural industry to improve competitiveness and profitability at 12 locations across the state. Ohio State is grateful for the 3.0% funding increase in both years of this line.
- Sea Grant – This appropriation supports the Ohio Sea Grant Program in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences. This program is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Sea Grant College Program, which works to protect Lake Erie and coastal resources. In addition, the Sea Grant partners with the Ohio Department of Higher Education and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency on water-quality assessment, protection and improvement. Please maintain the current levels of funding in the Governor’s as-introduced version of the budget.
- State of Ohio Action for Resiliency Network (SOAR Network) – I strongly support the increase in the Statewide Treatment and Prevention line item for FY24. In addition to

funding the buildout for Ohio's transitional step-down housing, these resources will also be used for behavioral health, innovation, and research. Up to \$110,000,000 over the biennium may be used by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to create the State of Ohio Action for Resiliency Network. This funding will provide The SOAR Network with the capacity to develop and implement a strategic agenda for research, clinical trials, direct care, telehealth, data collection, and workforce training on innovative practices in behavioral prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery. Ohio State and the Wexner Medical Center are committed to partnering with the state in these areas to help Ohioans thrive.

- Ohio State University Clinic Support & Ohio State University Clinical Teaching – The Clinical Teaching and Clinic Support line items assist with Ohio State University's laboratory and clinical teaching components of medical and other health-related curricula. I would ask that these line items be maintained at the levels proposed in the Governor's as-introduced version of the budget.
- The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine (OSUCVM) – More than 80% of practicing veterinarians in Ohio graduated from the OSUCVM. This state support is vitally important to the college's mission to educate the next generation of Ohio veterinarians, protect Ohio's food supply, prevent infectious disease outbreaks, and assist agricultural production. Additionally, this appropriation will help with access and affordability for in-state students. We are requesting enhanced support in this line item with funding totaling \$7.5 million in FY24 and \$10 million in FY25. The OSUCVM is the only college of veterinary medicine in Ohio, and these increases will help maintain the national and global excellence achieved by this college as well as enable efforts to serve the entire state of Ohio.
- Co-Op Internship – This line item positions the state's colleges and universities as assets to encourage collaboration with the business community, enhanced work-based learning opportunities through expansion of internships, externships, and co-ops, and allow Ohio to continue as a net importer of students. Ohio State, along with many of our peers, supports an increase in funding in this line item. Each school is requesting an increase of \$150,000 across the biennium, and I support the Ohio State University's John Glenn College of Public Affairs request for this amount.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony today. We remain deeply committed to Ohio and our core mission as a land-grant university. Ohio State's success is Ohio's success—for our students, families, businesses and our economy. I look forward to working with you as a key partner in the years to come.