

**TESTIMONY OF MARK BARTMAN, Maj Gen (Ret.), USAF, IN SUPPORT  
OF RESTORING 381.410 LIA 235533**

THURSDAY JUNE 8, 2023, 9:00 A.M. SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chairman Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes and Members of the Finance Committee. Good morning. I am providing written testimony to you today to stress the importance of the Ohio Academy of Science's STEM programs that The Ohio House of Representatives had included in Line Item 235533, requesting to restore funding to keep vitally needed science and STEM programs for Ohio young adults at \$1 million annually through FY24-FY25.

I will be brief. We know the needs of the Ohio employer community. We know that technical science, math, technology, and engineering careers lead to well paying and productive employment in Ohio. We know the struggles of employers to find well qualified individuals to fill jobs. This General Assembly is raising wages for health care workers to keep them working, which is great. Conversely, in the STEM professions, the employers are the ones raising wages to attract great Ohio citizens to work, but they need qualified applicants.

Section 381.410, Line Item 235533 is one of the tools in the toolbox that we need to retain and attract these businesses vital to the lifeblood of our state. The Academy of Science's STEM promotion and scholarship program are student based programs that challenge students to develop academic success and get them thinking like engineers, scientists, entrepreneurs, mathematicians, exactly the skills our employer community says are needed for bright careers.

I'm sure all of you know the importance of our federal partners around Ohio, to include Wright-Patterson AFB and the surrounding support businesses, NASA-Glenn, and the thriving medical and technology companies that are remaking out state's economy. These businesses can only succeed if they have the human resources to succeed. The Academy of Science is one of the superb private suppliers of educational needs who do it at a great bargain to the state. A \$1 million annual investment in these STEM programs invests in kids whose role models are the likes of Thomas Edison, The Wright Brothers, Garrett Morgan, Neil Armstrong.

My military career would not have been as successful had it not been for leveraging the engineering, science, and math skills I learned and applied to

my career. Please help to continue this program that is unique, challenging, and producing graduates with a core STEM competency, the future Edisons, Wrights, Morgans, and Armstrongs of today.

Please restore to House funding levels The Ohio Academy of Sciences Section 381.410 LI 235533, which positively impacts lives and careers of your constituents. Thank you for reading this testimony on a topic I feel is critical for Ohio's success.