Computer Science Advocacy Coalition

February 13, 2023

Ohio Senate
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Senator,

Thank you for your continued dedication to the success of Ohio's job creators and growth of our State. The Ohio General Assembly has displayed a commitment to build Ohio's workforce and ensure Ohioans have the skills necessary to pursue in-demand jobs. These efforts have propelled the workforce in the Buckeye State – but there is more work to be done, especially in the computing and technology field. The undersigned organizations have come together to advocate that the Ohio House and Senate maintain the Governor's efforts in the budget to advance and expand computer science access in our state.

The policies currently in the budget align with the ten recommendations that were published from the State Committee on Computer Science (SCCS). SCCS was established by then General Assembly in the last operating budget (HB 110) and tasked state agencies, business leaders, institutions of higher education and computer science advocacy organizations with delivering actionable recommendations on how to increase access to computer science education in Ohio. By implementing key recommendations and funding – like creating an Office of Computer Science Education, enacting Ohio's CS Promise which guarantees students have the opportunity to take at least one CS class per year, and expanding teacher licensure and professional development in computer science education – Ohio can become a leading state in computer science education and prepare our young people for careers in a variety of industries.

Recent economic development wins in our state highlight the growing need to have a workforce skilled in computer science and related fields. By implementing these policies, the State of Ohio will send a clear message to both job creators and young people that Ohio is ready to commit to the jobs of the future.

Inaction could jeopardize Ohio's ability to attract future economic development projects since the state is already facing a workforce shortage. In 2022, the state had 18,809 computing jobs open each month with an average salary of $86,642 per year. Yet, there were only 1,842 computer science college graduates in 2019, which left many of these jobs unfilled. Ohio students are lacking access and exposure to computer science at a young age which creates a workforce that is not ready to fill these vacancies in the future.

The computer science recommendations in the Governor's introduced budget will not only help build a workforce to fill these jobs, they will also raise Ohio's current ranking of 34th in the percentage of Ohio high schools offering computer science courses. Our low ranking is because only 48% of Ohio's

public schools offer any kind of computer science course. Of the 48%, most courses are offered in suburban school districts (57%), while urban school districts only offer computer science education in 47 districts statewide. These statistics represent an inequity and lack of K-12 computer science access across the state, but they also represent a great opportunity to improve and offer students a different passion for their careers.

Thank you again for your commitment to meeting Ohio's workforce needs and recognizing there is still more work to be done. Now is the time to invest in computer science access to help fill the jobs of today and the future. We look forward to continuing our collaboration to help the State of Ohio

Sincerely,