

The Strickland Vision to Move Ohio Forward

Turnaround Ohio: the Strickland/Fisher plan to create and keep jobs in Ohio by investing in Ohio's strengths, such as energy production and entrepreneurship, while bringing us the jobs of the future by making sure that we have the most educated workforce possible.

We know that healthy, happy children are able to learn; that good learners in effective schools become educated learners ready to contribute as workers; that able workers stay where there are worthy opportunities. We know that when good jobs are performed well, for fair pay, we start a cycle of success that builds its own momentum, creating opportunities for new investment, a growing tax base, stable families -- everything Ohio has been losing for almost two decades.

Turnaround Ohio is the Strickland/Fisher strategy to make sure we start that cycle of success here in Ohio, and here are its key components:

1. **Provide every child a fair start** through access to high-quality early care and education.
2. **Create schools that work for every child** by giving teachers the tools and technology they need to stimulate creative, problem-solving students to power Ohio's 21st century economy.
3. Dramatically increase the number of students in Ohio's colleges and universities by broadening access and ensuring that those who attend succeed and graduate with a **degree that counts**.
4. **Focus on Ohio's strengths** by building on Ohio's regional economies and globally competitive industries, spurring small and mid-size business growth, supporting emerging entrepreneurs in our cities, fostering innovation and unleashing the potential of Ohio's great universities and investing in next generation energy as a job source as well as a resource.
5. Provide all Ohioans the opportunities to attain **skills for high-quality jobs**.
6. **Stabilize health costs for government and businesses alike and advance the health of our citizens** by increasing the number of Ohioans who have access to affordable, high-quality healthcare, preventing illnesses and injury and focusing on community-based services for children, families, older adults and persons with disabilities.
7. **Retain, create and attract jobs worthy of Ohio workers** by focusing on industry sectors in which Ohio companies are growing, and which will spur our economy to generate wealth and prosperity for the future.

Read more about Ted's vision to Turnaround Ohio.



Restoring Transparency and Accountability to the Bureau of Workers Compensation

Introduced: September 13, 2006

The Strickland-Fisher Administration will take bold action to implement real reform at the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation. Our plan will rebuild the trust relationship that must exist between business, labor and the workers' compensation delivery system and assure that the system operates to serve their interests.



Revitalizing Our Cities and Towns

Introduced: August 21, 2006

Revitalizing Our Cities and Towns is our commitment to give local leaders the tools they need to create jobs and attract investments to make their communities vibrant centers of commerce. There are no great states without great cities, and as Governor and Lt. Governor, we will pursue a revitalization plan and an urban investment agenda that will work to create jobs in vibrant cities, provide an education that works for every student, and ensure we have safe and healthy communities throughout Ohio.



Improving Our Healthcare System to Benefit All Ohioans

Introduced: August 17, 2006

Ohio's employers, providers, and consumers are all experiencing the detrimental effects of escalating healthcare costs. There are 1.3 million uninsured in Ohio, many of whom are working full-time. In part because of this high number, health insurance premiums for those Ohioans who do have coverage are increasing at an alarming rate. Our healthcare system also fails to deliver adequate primary care services that could prevent many of the chronic and more costly healthcare conditions currently driving up the cost of care.

While government alone can't solve these problems, Ted Strickland believes the State of Ohio can play an important role in strengthening our healthcare system and reducing the cost of health care coverage. A Strickland-Fisher Administration will substantially increase the number of Ohioans covered by establishing a free-market clearinghouse for private health insurance plans where all uninsured Ohioans—regardless of income—can purchase coverage at reasonable prices.



The Turnaround Ohio Government Accountability Plan: Living Within Our Means, Investing In What Matters, and Demanding Results

Introduced: July 24, 2006

The Ohio Government Accountability Plan demonstrates how we will live within our means and invest in what matters by focusing on core goals and directing the entire state government and budget toward meeting those goals. It is our roadmap to a lean, competitive, modern government that is a critical player in Ohio's economic growth.



Making Ohio a Place that Our Past and Present Military Want to Call Home

Introduced: June 23, 2006

Ohio has a proud history of its sons and daughters serving in our nation's armed forces. In fact, Ohio is home to over 1 million veterans and tens of thousands more who are serving today. Over 50% of Ohio's National Guard members have answered the call to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as recent national disasters such as Hurricane Katrina. It is these men and women that have sacrificed for us all. And it is these men and women who deserve a Governor to stand with them and stand for them, recognizing their service and fulfilling the promises made by a grateful nation and a grateful state.



Learning for Life: High-Quality Education for High-Quality Jobs

Introduced: April 24, 2006

To turnaround Ohio and give all Ohioans and their families an opportunity to better themselves, we must sharply increase the percentage of Ohioans who go on to complete college, certification or other training and make sure that high-quality jobs are awaiting them when they do so. We must change our entire attitude about the importance of lifelong learning. Ohioans must be able to access a fluid, continuous learning system – one that provides a seamless progression from early childhood through higher education and on, with each step in the progression equal in value. We must set high goals, raise aspirations and expectations and open the doors for every Ohioan to the learning environments that will challenge and prepare our next generation.



Jobs Worthy of Ohioans: The Strickland/Fisher Strategy for Job Creation in Ohio

Introduced: April 10, 2006

The Strickland/Fisher Strategy for Job Creation in Ohio proposal meets a number of Turnaround Ohio's most important goals: developing the jobs of the future, providing opportunities for our young people, boosting the wages of Ohio workers, promoting better labor relations, spurring entrepreneurship and enterprise expansion, and renewing the state's economic infrastructure. With these goals, we can raise the incomes of all Ohioans and propel our economy into the 21st century.



BroadbandOhio: Powering Ohio's Economy and Connecting it to World Markets

Introduced: March 13, 2006

The BroadbandOhio: Powering Ohio's Economy and Connecting it to World Markets proposal aims to help meet one of Turnaround Ohio's most important goals: developing the jobs of the future by leveraging the state's investment in broadband infrastructure to create a competitive, well-connected economy in Ohio.



Learning for Life: Skills for High-Quality Jobs

Introduced: March 6, 2006

Businesses tell us that the biggest obstacle they face in expanding and growing is their ability to attract and retain highly skilled and motivated employees. We need to face facts, and get Ohioans ready for the jobs of the 21st century. Ohio has 1.4 million workers with less than a high school diploma and an additional 1 million with some college, but no degree.

More than 60% of jobs that our businesses will create by the year 2012 will require some college education. Census data shows that just two years of education, such as an associate's degree, is worth \$400,000 to an who pursues additional education. And, as Ohio's economy continues its transition to a service and knowledge-oriented economy, recent SBA studies show that higher rates of educational attainment will result in higher small business survival rates.

Ohio spends about \$400 million a year on and workforce education and training. Our investments should be reaping tremendous rewards for our state, and helping us to create jobs, stimulate new business development and help companies to better meet the global competition of new markets. But they are not.



Learning for Life: A Fair Start for Every Ohio Child

Introduced: February 14, 2006

Children are born learning. The miracle of brain research has shown us that roughly 85% of a child's brain is developed by age 5. Yet, currently, less than 1.5% of Ohio's investment in children occurs by that time. The earliest years offer a tremendous opportunity for building a lifetime of positive outcomes. We can and should support Ohio's parents in making smart choices that help each child have the best possible start in life.

Investment in high quality early care and learning will help us simultaneously improve Ohio's social, education, and economic outcomes.

Far too many Ohio children are falling behind at the start of their academic journeys. This achievement gap has roots that begin long before a child enters the schoolhouse door. Participation in high quality early learning programs is a demonstrated method for boosting school readiness for vulnerable children. We must make such opportunities available to all Ohio's children, particularly those at risk of failure.



Powering Ohio's Economy: The Strickland Strategy for Creating Good Jobs through Clean Energy in Ohio

Introduced: December 9, 2005

Ohio has one of the most energy intensive economies in the country. To put it simply, our industries, from farming to chemicals, from automotive parts to software, use a lot of energy. According to the United States Department of Energy, Ohio is 6th in total energy consumed; 4th in use of electricity and the 4th largest industrial energy user in the US.

So when energy prices skyrocket, not only do ordinary Ohioans struggle to make ends meet, but the vast supply chain that powers Ohio's businesses is vulnerable. Thousands of Ohio jobs are at stake in the three industry sectors in which energy and jobs are closely intertwined: automotive manufacturing, agriculture and power generation.

Because of this reality, Ohio has a tremendous opportunity to grow its economy by building on its existing strength in energy production. A recent study by Policy Matters and the Apollo Alliance showed that as many as 22,000 new jobs could be created in Ohio by investing in alternative energy.

Turnaround Ohio: Revitalizing Our Cities and Towns

Turnaround Ohio aims to keep and grow the jobs we have by investing in Ohio's strengths and bringing the jobs of the future by making sure we have the most educated workforce possible.

Revitalizing Our Cities and Towns is our commitment to give local leaders the tools they need to create jobs and attract investments to make their communities vibrant centers of commerce. There are no great states without great cities, and as Governor and Lt. Governor, we will pursue a revitalization plan and an urban investment agenda that will work to create jobs in vibrant cities, provide an education that works for every student, and ensure we have safe and healthy communities throughout Ohio.

1) JOBS IN VIBRANT CITIES

Ohio has had a proud history of economic success that springs from our cities. Whether it is aviation in Dayton, rubber in Akron, marketing in Cincinnati, insurance in Columbus, glass in Toledo, bearings in Canton, steel in Youngtown, or manufacturing in Cleveland, our cities once dominated their industries. But recently, because of policy decisions that have emptied out our core communities, Ohio's towns and cities have not been the vibrant centers of commerce they once were.

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will partner with our cities and towns and embrace a new generation of entrepreneurs and innovation by:

- **Taking the Urban Entrepreneur Partnership Statewide and Promoting Economic Inclusion**

The survival and growth of business start-ups in urban areas can be significantly improved with a comprehensive, high quality program that supports our entrepreneurs. Ohio is home to two highly successful, nationally recognized urban entrepreneurship programs that all of our communities can emulate. Cleveland and Cincinnati have piloted the Urban Entrepreneur Partnership in collaboration with the Kauffman Foundation, resulting in exceptional growth among businesses in the program. In Cleveland, the program is operated out of the Small Business Development Center and resides at the National Urban League. Cincinnati's program operates in cooperation with the Cincinnati Urban Empowerment Center. Both programs provide urban entrepreneurs with access to a high quality network of business services and complement these resources with a comprehensive counseling program from a network of committed peer companies and executives. Notably, this program results in improved economic inclusion for minority businesses, in terms of access to capital, diversity of suppliers for businesses and government, and workplace diversity in executive suites and corporate boardrooms.

The Strickland-Fisher Administration will take this approach – and its economic inclusion successes – statewide, developing similar programs specifically designed for urban entrepreneurs in every major city in the state. We will dedicate \$5 million annually to this project, which can be funded by reallocating funds currently used for the Economic Development Division and the Small Business Development Centers Program within Ohio's Department of Development.

- **Establishing New Micro-Incubators**

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will work with local communities to replicate the success of existing business incubation programs. These “micro-incubators” will provide start-ups with immediate access to ready-to-occupy flexible office space with room to grow and the ability to tap into shared computing facilities. Entrepreneurs additionally benefit from mentoring provided by local business leaders and university faculty involved in the program. Research has shown that public investment in incubators results in greatly expanded tax revenues and increases the chance that the businesses will succeed and grow. Communities that can demonstrate significant local commitment to the program will be selected in a competitive process. Four new centers will be established at an anticipated start-up expense of \$3.5 million and annual operating costs of \$.75 million. The program will be paid for with a combination of federal sources, including the Department of Commerce and the Appalachian Regional Commission, and existing state funds within the Ohio Department of Development.

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will work with local leaders to make Ohio’s cities and towns attractive places to do business by:

- **Supporting the Ohio Main Streets Program and Historic Preservation Tax Credits**

As a symbol of a community’s heritage, the health of its historic downtown district provides a visible indication of an area’s economic vitality, in turn affecting its ability to recruit new businesses and residents. In Ohio, the nonprofit Heritage Ohio operates the Ohio Main Street Program, promoting historic preservation and economic development of traditional downtown business districts. Communities selected for official “Main Street” designation undertake a rigorous program of consultation and planning and seek private investments and federal grants to redevelop downtowns into vital centers of community activity and commerce. Since the program’s inception in 1998, Ohio’s thirty-two Main Street communities have helped stimulate civic pride and economic activity, producing over \$300 million in reinvestment and more than 1,800 full-time jobs.

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will commit \$3 million annually to the Ohio Main Street program and participating communities. Funding will be provided by reallocating resources within the Ohio Department of Development.

Additionally, the Ohio House of Representatives recently passed a bill to provide for a State Historic Preservation Tax Credit. This is a good first step for attracting investments and supporting the redevelopment of existing communities. We will support efforts in the General Assembly to move this bill forward.

- **Using Ohio’s NextGen Broadband Network to power downtown wireless districts in Ohio’s cities and towns**

In BroadbandOhio, the Turnaround Ohio plan for broadband deployment statewide, we have focused on an affordable way to build out broadband on the Ohio NextGen Network to every county seat in all 88 counties. As part of that strategy, the NextGen Network will make available high bandwidth connectivity for economic development and municipal use. Such connectivity is important for attracting new businesses to Ohio’s towns and cities. Additionally, every county seat in Ohio and many neighboring towns will be able to affordably create wireless districts in their downtowns and commercial areas.

- **Creating an Urban Markets Tax Credit**

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will also work with Ohio's mayors and neighborhood leaders to create an Ohio Urban Markets Program, designed to stimulate investment in our urban neighborhoods by attracting private investment through a new investment tax credit program. We want to help build healthy neighborhoods by investing in economic and community development projects that create jobs locally, provide critically needed healthcare and that create affordable housing opportunities. This would begin as a pilot program, modeled after the successful New Markets Tax Credit Program at the federal level. A Strickland-Fisher Administration would dedicate \$20 million in tax credits for the first year of this program.

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will ensure investments in infrastructure that will make our towns, cities and state places that can support the needs of businesses by:

- **Making Ohio a Gateway to International Commerce and a Hub for the Nation's Freight**

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will harness Ohio's strengths and partner with private industry to create the Ohio Gateway – an integrated network of multi-modal facilities that seamlessly links Ohio's citizens, businesses, railways, highways and port facilities into the most advanced and efficient transportation system in America. Ohio's location, industrial base and network of distribution and logistics assets uniquely position our state to become a premiere gateway to international commerce and a hub for the nation's freight. Sixty three percent of the U.S. manufacturing base and major population centers of the Northeast, Midwest and Canada lie within 600 miles of Ohio. Furthermore, the state ranks 4th in the nation in the value of freight exported, third in imports and is home to a number of major air and seaports.

To reach its full economic potential, Ohio must create the conditions necessary to attract the distribution and logistics industries to move the nation's goods using our ports, rails and roads. The explosive growth that is forecast to occur in freight shipments across Ohio cannot be accommodated by our current infrastructure alone. To be successful, we must also link our many air and water ports, expand our rail network, link local communities to major rail lines, and create seamless connections to port facilities and transportation hubs in nearby states and countries. Development of the Ohio Gateway requires a bold approach to transportation planning that is closely tied to the state's economic development objectives. By improving our rail system, modernizing our ports and building regional partnerships, we will establish Ohio as home base to the nation's distribution and logistics industries that could potentially create 40,000 new jobs in the eight years of a Strickland-Fisher Administration.

I am on record supporting the Ohio Hub, a rail system that will serve intercity corridors with integrated air, highway and transit. Investment in rail infrastructure will strengthen our state's assets as a premiere gateway to international comers, a hub for the nation's freight and lay the groundwork for passenger service. A Strickland-Fisher Administration will strongly support efforts to move ahead on freight rail expansion in Ohio, working for passage of pending legislation to provide federal matching funds for rail projects. We will also double funding for Ohio Rail Development Commission grants for local rail spurs and intermodal facility construction projects at an annual cost to GRF of \$2 million.

- **Incentivizing Smart Growth and Making “Fix-It-First” a Priority for State Investments**

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will embrace “Fix-It-First” and “Smart Growth” principles as strategies to redevelop our urban areas. Ohio should not be using taxpayer dollars to promote unchecked sprawl or to encourage the abandonment of cities. Fix-It-First policies will allow us to, where appropriate, focus our spending on the repair of existing roads, bridges, rails, and other infrastructure. And when new infrastructure is needed, Smart Growth policies will allow Ohio to direct investment toward those areas specifically designated by local jurisdictions for growth.

- **Address The Problem of Vacant and Abandoned Industrial and Residential Buildings and Land**

Development of brownfields – urban and rural sites with environmental contamination – costs six to eight times what it costs to develop pristine land. The public sector must help narrow this differential. A Strickland-Fisher Administration will use our experience in obtaining federal support for state priorities by working with Ohio’s Congressional delegation to obtain additional brownfield redevelopment funding.

Today, the Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund (CORF) in the Ohio Department of Development provides critical financial assistance in the cleanup of brownfield sites for communities that are seeking to revitalize contaminated sites. The program has been particularly helpful in urban areas which are facing significant challenges in redeveloping sites that had previously been productive. The Strickland-Fisher Administration will actively support efforts for the reauthorization and continued funding of the Clean Ohio program and will work to improve its administration so that we can adequately meet the significant needs of our communities.

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will partner with local leaders to ensure policy decisions at the state level will support our towns and cities by:

- **Establishing a Governor’s Office of Urban Development and Infrastructure and Creating an Ohio Development and Redevelopment Plan**

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will establish the Governor’s Office of Urban Development and Infrastructure, charged with assuring that the priorities of Ohio’s cities and towns are articulated and made part of all our Turnaround Ohio priorities across all cabinet agencies, boards and commissions. Additionally, this office will coordinate development of an Ohio Development and Redevelopment Plan through a statewide process with significant input from mayors, city councils and metropolitan planning organizations. This plan will target Ohio development to those areas of the state where it is needed and desired, better allocating resources to areas that need them for job development, infrastructure renewal or to preserve farmland. Ohio’s ability to revitalize economically will require an interagency and state-local approach never before undertaken in our state.

- **Supporting and Reforming the Local Government Fund**

The Local Government Fund is a tangible expression of the longstanding, 70-year partnership in Ohio between the state and local leaders. We must remain committed to the Local Government Fund and improve it, not destroy it. The Strickland-Fisher Administration will oppose any legislative efforts to repeal the Local Government Fund and will devote our efforts to rebuilding and

reforming it to adjust to tax changes and program priorities important to Ohio's cities and towns. We will support current initiatives to reform the local government fund, so that it:

- o Adequately supports local social service needs
- o Is predictable and stable from year to year, protecting the state budget, as well as our cities and towns from see-saw budgeting
- o Provides strong support for safe and secure communities
- o Allows for long-term investments for job creation and formation

• Establishing an Ohio Community Charter that will Reward Cities and Towns Working Together to Build Strong Regional Economies

Companies often need to react to market changes, and move locations to maximize the efficiency of operations. But in other cases, the move of a building a few blocks will move a company's tax base from one community to another. Under the Strickland-Fisher Administration, the state will take a strong stand against poaching (the practice of enticing one company to a neighboring town just to obtain the tax revenue base and jobs). We need cities and towns that work in partnership to build strong regional economies that will turn our state around, not civic leaders that seek to undermine their neighbors.

The Strickland-Fisher Administration will create a certification process for communities, in consultation with Ohio's professional economic development organizations. Certified communities will sign a Community Charter signifying that they are committed to collaborative approaches to development such as adhering to a regionally developed "non-compete" arrangement and allowing school districts to have a voice in how abatements are implemented. The state, for its part, will prioritize its approval of economic development tax incentives for projects for those cities and towns that have signed the Community Charter.

The state will also encourage joint economic development districts to enhance regional economic cooperation among local governments. These projects can create win-win solutions with multiple jurisdictions sharing new revenues and gaining jobs for their respective citizens. The state must clear the obstacles that impede the ability of local governments who choose to share revenues under these agreements.

• Bringing Funding Decisions to Town Squares, not Capitol Square

As communicated in recent policy announcements, the Turnaround Ohio economic development strategy will "regionalize" state dollars for economic development, infrastructure support and workforce training. Decisions about funding priorities and budget allocations will be put close to those neighborhoods that have the most knowledge and stake in those decisions. This will allow local and regional civic, business, and elected leaders to determine the best economic development investment strategy for their region.

- **Making the Job Ready Sites Program City-Friendly**

The Job Ready Sites Program, one element of the public works and economic development bond package approved by voters last fall, is a seven year grant program intended to create a statewide inventory of sites available for immediate use by large-scale commercial and industrial operations. Upon taking office, the Strickland-Fisher Administration will take immediate actions to ensure that the rules of this program do not disadvantage our cities. Specially, we will roll back the Job Ready Sites rules that currently limit the program to sites greater than 150 acres.

- **Continuing a strong support for the Arts to boost Ohio's Creative Cities**

Cities across America are now recognizing that the Arts are not only a quality of life issue but also an economic engine for development and revitalization. Civic leaders are acknowledging that the Arts play a key role in determining a city's social and economic identity. Arts and cultural facilities are the foundation of Ohio's vibrant history. These facilities and the exciting programs they provide add value to every community and are particularly important to attracting and retaining creative knowledge workers and revitalizing communities. There are nearly 17,000 arts-related businesses in Ohio and those businesses employ more than 89,000 people. A Strickland-Fisher Administration is committed to providing state capital funds for community arts projects that will achieve the most productive results for the public. The state should adopt standards and a model community capital improvements process for all state-funded arts projects using the Ohio Cultural Facilities Commission.

- **Leading by Example**

We will assure that investments in state facilities and new leases are made with a priority on locations that are close to transit routes and in core urban areas. We will focus state resources on reusing vacant and abandoned buildings in urban cores, bringing daytime, pedestrian traffic back to our urban centers and spurring strong urban retail markets.

2) EDUCATION THAT WORKS

Education is the backbone of our communities and the gateway to economic opportunity. All of Ohio's families, despite where they live, must be able to send their children to safe schools that provide them the skills they need to compete in a global economy. Many of our education proposals have been laid out in previous Turnaround Ohio announcements including Learning for Life: A Fair Start for Every Ohio Child and Learning for Life: High Quality Education for High Quality Jobs. Below is a recap of some of those previously announced initiatives as well as new commitments to other important programs.

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will ensure that all Ohioans have access to an education that works and schools serve as dynamic centers of our communities by:

- **Closing the Achievement Gap at an Early Age**

Ohioans are born with many different levels of opportunities, and despite their individual circumstances, the Strickland-Fisher Administration is committed to giving all of Ohio's children a fair start in life. Investments in the earliest years offer a tremendous opportunity for building a lifetime of positive outcomes, but far too many Ohio children are falling behind at the start of their academic journeys. This achievement gap has roots that begin long before a child enters the schoolhouse door, but participation in high quality early learning programs is a demonstrated method for boosting school readiness for vulnerable children. We must make such opportunities available to all of Ohio's children, particularly those at risk for failure. In our Turnaround Ohio proposal Learning for Life: A Fair Start for Every Ohio Child, we commit to investing \$50 million per year in quality early care and education. In this plan, we also recognize the critical importance of a child's social, emotional and physical development in school readiness and lifelong learning and have pledged to increase the availability of voluntary screening and treatment of physical and behavioral health problems in young children.

- **Ensuring All Students High-Quality Teaching and Instruction**

The research is clear: the single most important thing that a school can provide its students with is a skilled and knowledgeable teacher. As explained in our Turnaround Ohio proposal Learning for Life: High Quality Education for High Quality Jobs, we will work to incentivize public colleges and universities to prepare primary and secondary teachers who agree to work in "hard-to-staff" schools including schools with high rates of teacher turnover, high proportions of under-prepared teachers and low rates of student achievement.

- **Adequately Funding Interventions for At-Risk Students who are Not at Grade Level**

The State of Ohio has already mandated diagnostic and achievement assessments and interventions for our under-performing students. Unfortunately, current leadership has not appreciated the value of helping these students and has not adequately funded these interventions. A Strickland-Fisher Administration will be committed to making sure that our students, especially those most at risk, will not be left behind. We will support both interventions that complement classroom instruction as well as strategies that could include opportunities in smaller classes and after school programs. If our economic development depends on a strong, educated and capable workforce, we can no longer afford to ignore our under-performing children.

- **Engaging Communities and Schools in Preventing Dropouts**

Leaving school without a diploma deprives young people of not only needed knowledge and skills, but it also deprives them of the availability of opportunities throughout their lives. Dropouts are likely to have low lifetime earnings and higher incarceration rates, and there is also a higher likelihood that their children will drop out of high school and start the cycle anew. Unfortunately, research suggests that nearly one out of three public high school students won't graduate. As outlined in our Turnaround Ohio proposal Learning for Life: High Quality Education for High Quality Jobs, a Strickland-Fisher Administration won't ignore school dropouts. Instead, it will challenge educators, families, and communities to give these young people a second chance. By identifying those at risk for dropping out and expanding programs that are targeted at our students in danger of leaving school, we can work with students to ensure that they remain engaged.

- **Ensuring Stable, Secure Funding for Education**

For many years, Ohio has experienced an education funding crisis in both K-12 education and in the continued decline of state support for post-secondary education. The Strickland-Fisher Administration will bring all parties together to craft a new method of funding schools that is consistent with the demands of the Ohio Constitution.

- **Encouraging Young Ohioans to Overcome Alienation and Raise Aspirations**

Many young African American students, especially low income urban males, begin to form opinions about their opportunities in life at a very young age. They look around and see disinvestment in their communities, lack of job opportunities, and an emerging peer culture that reflects survival, not long-term planning. Regrettably, at the beginning of this decade, more African-American men were in Ohio's prisons than were in our college and universities. We can engage at-risk students through after-school, culturally specific, and academically focused programs. We can also infuse professional development and teacher education programs with cultural competency components so teachers will know their students and build on what their students bring to school.

We must also provide all Ohioans, especially those most at risk, real opportunities for higher education. Unfortunately, over the last decade state support for higher education has diminished while tuition costs have increased. This puts more of the financial burden of higher education on the student and puts higher education further out of reach. We can no longer go in this direction. In our Turnaround Ohio proposal Learning for Life: High Quality Education for High Quality Jobs, we lay out our commitment to a number of proposals, including Ohio's Knowledge Bank, that will raise aspirations and make college a reality for more Ohioans.

- **Recognizing Schools as Centers of Our Communities**

Ohio's schools have the potential to be more than solid academic centers. Schools can serve as the centers for community life. The Strickland-Fisher Administration will support using our high schools after school hours for recreation, adult training classes, social service and health programs, cultural activities, and as a gathering place for the surrounding community. Having the school open late and year-round for community activities can also increase the safety of our neighborhoods by providing our young people alternatives to deviant behavior.

To achieve this goal of making schools the centers of our communities, we must look at how we construct and renovate our schools. Ohio currently spends billions of dollars through the School Facilities Commission to build and renovate our schools. Unfortunately, the Commission uses a design model that fails to fully recognize the needs of communities, which often results in schools that are disconnected from neighborhoods. In fact, some of the design requirements even rule out new school building in urban neighborhoods. A Strickland-Fisher Administration will take steps to revise these rules so that they are friendlier to urban school development and redevelopment.

3) SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Our neighborhoods must be safe, healthy, and nurturing places for young people to learn and grow. In our Turnaround Ohio plan, we have articulated very specific initiatives aimed at improving access to basic healthcare services and expanding the number of Ohioans with health insurance. Some of these already released initiatives are reflected below.

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will work to end health disparities by:

- **Increasing Access to Affordable Healthcare Coverage**

Lack of health insurance is a growing national problem, but it is more pronounced for the African-American community. The Strickland-Fisher Administration will work to close the gap and make affordable health insurance available to more Ohioans. We will also pursue policies to both fully utilize and expand the number of our community health centers to increase access to under-served populations.

- **Providing Preventative Care**

In the United States, we have the most advanced healthcare system in the world but must endure the disgrace of having one of the least healthy populations among industrialized nations. One of the reasons for the embarrassingly low ranking is that our health and social service systems, which share a mission to assist those at risk and improve health, do not share a broad-based strategy to identify and treat those most at risk. In Ohio, many of those most at risk for catastrophic outcomes associated with pregnancy, diabetes, and hypertension enter our system through our emergency rooms. This system short-changes preventive care and neglects wellness. It focuses on treating preventable diseases after they occur, rather than promoting good health up-front. A Strickland-Fisher Administration will invest in the kind of front-end, preventive care that we know lowers overall healthcare costs and keeps people healthy.

- **Working to Increase the number of Minorities in Health Professions**

African-Americans remain underrepresented in health professions. In 2004, only 2.3% of all non-federal physicians in Ohio and 6% of Ohio's medical school graduates were African-American. A Strickland-Fisher Administration will seek to improve quality of care for all Ohioans by encouraging medical institutions to recruit more minorities into their programs and to ensure all training meets the needs of diverse patient populations.

We must also ensure practitioners' abilities to treat patients regardless of race, gender, ethnic background or language barriers and find ways to provide the additional resources needed by healthcare professionals to ensure quality care for all populations.

• **Investing in Urban Healthcare Facilities**

Investment in healthcare facilities in African-American neighborhoods is low. Work must be done with all healthcare systems to encourage investment in impoverished neighborhoods, especially for the delivery of preventative services. Creating community healthcare centers in retail shopping complexes can offer patients a vast array of services during convenient hours and easier-to-access locations than isolated medical complexes. Research shows that patients have a greater propensity to utilize services that are co-located with grocery and other retail stores.

• **Investing in Community Safety**

With strong state leadership, community safety programs will be developed to revitalize neighborhoods by bringing together local businesses, schools, faith based organizations, the justice system, police and most importantly the individual members of the community. We will work with local leaders to reduce bureaucracy and empower them to adequately address the social and criminal elements that drag their communities down and disenfranchise local residents and businesses. The city of Akron and the Akron Community Foundation have created a neighborhood partnership program designed to encourage new creative neighborhood efforts. This program provides small matching grants to local organizations wanting to improve their neighborhoods, with programs that address safety, education, cleanup and/or vacant lot improvements. A Strickland-Fisher Administration will support such successful programs and as mentioned earlier in this document, will encourage the use of our schools after-hours so that communities can provide alternatives to deviant behavior.

• **Helping Communities Cope with Crime, Victimization and Prisoner Re-entry**

As a former psychologist in Ohio's prison system, Congressman Strickland has worked with inmates and understands the detrimental effects of incarceration on families, communities and the state. Those who are incarcerated are not providing for their families, employed in their communities, or positively contributing to their neighborhoods. They also cost the state \$25,280 per inmate annually.

Research shows that education and economic opportunity contribute to a reduction in incarcerations. Many of the policies laid out earlier in this document can create these opportunities and, when implemented, will prevent the number of incarcerations.

Ohio is also faced with the challenges of reintegrating inmates into our communities. Urban areas are frequently the areas that must bear the costs of reintegration; Cuyahoga County alone received over 20% of state prisoners released in 2001. If opportunities to become productive, law-abiding citizens are not available in a community, the likelihood of a recently released inmate returning to prison is increased.

As a member of Congress, Ted Strickland is a cosponsor of HR 1704, the Second Chance Act of 2005, introduced by Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones, which would provide federal funds for a variety of programs including housing, employment and family support services aimed at allowing those reentering our communities to become productive citizens who contribute to their families and local economies. Additionally, Ted has authored legislation to establish mental health courts and has been a vocal supporter of

drug courts, both of which divert clients to the appropriate treatment and supportive services in the community. As Governor, Ted will continue to encourage such supportive services in Ohio's cities and towns.

We must also do more to ensure our youth offenders do not go on to become incarcerated adults. The Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) reports that the three-year recidivism rate for youth offenders is 50%. We must provide prevention and support services such as education, after school programs and drug treatment to help with the reintegration of juvenile offenders so that they avoid the cycle of incarceration. Many of our cities are taking great steps to provide a successful reintegration of juvenile offenders, and a Strickland-Fisher Administration will support programs that work.

• Develop a Long Term Plan to End Homelessness and Support Affordable Housing in Neighborhoods

Because Ohio has not developed a long term plan for ending homelessness, we have paid the price through higher healthcare, emergency shelter, and criminal justice costs. We know that supportive housing that is permanent with services to help people become healthy and employable is more cost-effective and humane, and we have examples in Ohio that prove that it works. It takes leadership at the top levels of government, however, to coordinate the resources of housing, mental health, employment, and other services to create supportive housing that works.

There are three critical components to a supportive housing strategy: capital funding for the facilities; operating funding for management, maintenance, and utilities; and supportive services such as case management, alcohol and drug treatment, and employment readiness. Unless all three are available and coordinated, supportive housing won't develop on a scale that will end long term homelessness in Ohio.

The Strickland-Fisher Administration will significantly increase the number of supportive housing units by prioritizing state funds to increase the production and demonstrate the effectiveness of permanent supportive housing. Additionally, we will provide leadership to the Interagency Council on Homelessness. With leadership from the Governor's office and cabinet members, this council should focus on removing barriers to accessing mainstream resources for residents of supportive housing, including: Medicaid, Workforce Investment Act, Mental Health, and Alcohol and Drug Treatment. Finally, the Strickland-Fisher Administration will develop a long term plan for ending chronic homelessness that focuses on prevention as well as affordable housing and services.

A long term plan, with commitment from the top, will focus policy on the systemic changes that are needed to align affordable housing and access to supportive services to achieve better individual and community outcomes. The Strickland-Fisher Administration will work to reform some of the state's housing programs, such as the administration of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. This change will ensure that some housing units are built in "areas of opportunity." State policies will also be made and enforced to remove obstacles keeping citizens from affordable housing.

- **Build Assets in Our Neighborhoods and Combat Predatory Lending and Foreclosures for Residents**

Ohio is first in the country in foreclosures with a rate that is triple that of the nation and second in personal bankruptcies. Increasingly, the cities of Ohio are being ravaged by predatory lenders who make loans, grab quick profits, and then abandon properties and homeowners. Our cities are littered with abandoned homes that are vacant because of predatory lending. These lenders particularly target the elderly and minorities.

The legislature has recently taken action to combat these predatory lenders and we are committed to strong enforcement of these new laws to assure that Ohio's consumers are protected from unscrupulous lenders.

Additionally, a Strickland-Fisher Administration will also enforce HB 254 which expedites the process of getting foreclosed homes either fixed up and sold or torn down. Help will be given to victims of foreclosure to save their home, if possible, or to move on if not possible.

Finally, a Strickland-Fisher Administration will work to prevent foreclosures and bankruptcies from happening in the first place by educating consumers. State Representative Joyce Beatty has introduced a bill that would add, as a graduation requirement, that all Ohio high-school students receive a minimum of 10 hours of instruction in the field of personal economics including: financial planning, financial decision-making, and consumer credit. By educating students about such financial issues, predatory lenders will have a smaller chance of taking advantage of Ohio consumers.

Turnaround Ohio: Improving Our Healthcare System to Benefit All Ohioans

Turnaround Ohio aims to keep and grow the jobs we have by investing in Ohio's strengths and bringing the jobs of the future by making sure we have the most educated, capable workforce possible. We know that jobs will stay in Ohio and new jobs will come to this state if we provide a climate where there is access to affordable healthcare options, especially for small businesses.

Ohio's employers, providers, and consumers are all experiencing the detrimental effects of escalating healthcare costs. There are 1.3 million uninsured in Ohio, many of whom are working full-time. In part because of this high number, health insurance premiums for those Ohioans who do have coverage are increasing at an alarming rate. Our healthcare system also fails to deliver adequate primary care services that could prevent many of the chronic and more costly healthcare conditions currently driving up the cost of care.

While government alone can't solve these problems, Ted Strickland believes the State of Ohio can play an important role in strengthening our healthcare system and reducing the cost of health care coverage. A Strickland-Fisher Administration will substantially increase the number of Ohioans covered by establishing a free-market clearinghouse for private health insurance plans where all uninsured Ohioans—regardless of income—can purchase coverage at reasonable prices.

Increase the Number of Ohioans with Healthcare

Ohio Healthcare Exchange

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will partner with insurance companies and small businesses to create a marketplace where affordable healthcare plans would be available on a voluntary basis to all uninsured Ohioans who currently do not have access to employer-sponsored insurance. The Ohio Healthcare Exchange will be a free-market exchange for private health plans available to all Ohioans at low prices through the power of group purchasing.

Premium support will be available for the estimated 300,000 Medicaid-eligible Ohioans making up to 150% of the federal poverty level (\$30,000 annually for a family of four).

The benefits of the Exchange will extend well beyond the 1 million uninsured utilizing it. Ohio's taxpayers and those currently paying health insurance premiums will be positively affected as more Ohioans receive adequate, early care through a primary care physician and no longer enter the emergency room doors to receive uncompensated care. Additionally, because the insurance product resides with the individual, and the Exchange will provide a vehicle for collecting contributions, employers gain an enhanced ability to provide coverage to their employees, especially those who work part-time or as contractors.

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will seek a federal Medicaid 1115 Waiver to permit federal matching on spending to support the investment needed for this initiative. Combined with current state resources, this will generate sufficient funding to cover the cost of

the entire program – totaling \$550 million over the first two years. This will not take additional tax dollars from Ohio taxpayers, but will simply take advantage of available federal funding that the state of Ohio is not currently pursuing.

A Strickland-Fisher Administration knows that leadership is integral in implementing such a solution and that all stakeholders play a critical role in crafting the details of this innovative approach to covering the uninsured. We are committed to working in a bipartisan way with Ohio's insurance industry, business community, consumer advocates and provider community to reach a plan that is meaningful to the uninsured, responsible to Ohio's taxpayers, stable for our insurance market and business climate, and voluntary for individuals and businesses alike.

Reach out to the Uninsured Families and Children Who are Already Eligible for Coverage

Currently, there are approximately 100,000 parents and 150,000 children in Ohio who are already eligible for Medicaid or the State Children's Health Insurance Plan (SCHIP) that are not yet signed up. A Strickland-Fisher Administration will aggressively reach out to eligible families and children to make certain that they are covered. As an original cosponsor of legislation that led to creating SCHIP, Ted Strickland recognizes the special importance of healthcare coverage in the early years and will work to provide this coverage to all of Ohio's eligible children.

Continued Coverage for Ohioans with Severe Disabilities

Currently, Ohioans with severe disabilities are discouraged from becoming employed, because if they do, they will lose their much-needed Medicaid benefits. However, many of these Ohioans do want to work and contribute to Ohio's economy. Therefore, a Strickland-Fisher Administration will make changes so that Ohioans with severe disabilities have an opportunity to buy into the Medicaid program and continue to receive the specialized healthcare they need while working at a job that pays a living wage.

Initiate Healthy Ohio to Improve the Health of Ohioans and Save State Dollars through Prevention

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will invest in the kind of front-end, preventive care that we know lowers overall healthcare costs and keeps people healthy. In Ohio, many of those most at risk for catastrophic outcomes associated with pregnancy, diabetes, obesity and hypertension enter our system through our emergency rooms. This system short-changes preventive care and neglects wellness. It focuses on treating preventable diseases after they occur, rather than promoting good health up front.

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will launch Healthy Ohio, an initiative to identify duplicative health and social services costs paid for with state dollars and incentivize health contractors to achieve specific health and social service benchmarks. Contracts will be designed that focus on prevention for those Ohioans most at risk, using early intervention to change the course of life as well as save dollars for the state.

While we look to providers to play an integral role in ensuring those most at risk receive critical preventive care, we know that practitioners cannot do it alone. Individuals must also take responsibility for their own health. A Strickland-Fisher Administration will

challenge Ohio's families to play a role in Healthy Ohio by taking a larger responsibility in the healthcare decision-making process, focusing on preventive care and making appropriate, educated lifestyle choices.

Support Nursing Faculty to Fill Nursing Shortage

While we recognize there are several reasons for Ohio's nursing shortage, one of the most challenging problems is the lack of nursing faculty in place to educate and train new nurses.

If current trends continue, in the year 2020 there will be 29% too few registered nurses practicing in Ohio. Yet at the same time, nursing educational programs are denying admission to over three thousand qualified applicants each year because nursing schools in Ohio lack trained clinical faculty.

Nursing has long served as a hub with which many other healthcare disciplines interact in order to maximize overall consumer outcomes, and we can no longer afford to have too few nurses on healthcare's front lines. The Strickland-Fisher Healthy Ohio initiative will work with Ohio's healthcare and higher education communities to address the shortage of nurses by making clinical faculty jobs more competitive, and offering salary and other incentives to encourage trained clinical faculty to stay in Ohio and teach.

Improve Quality and Save Dollars through Ohio NextGen

The Strickland-Fisher Broadband Ohio proposal will expand access to quality broadband in every corner of Ohio and, in the process, create a competitive, well-connected economy in Ohio.

One extremely important benefit of the Broadband Ohio proposal will be the impact this next generation broadband access will have on the healthcare community.

A Strickland-Fisher administration will be dedicated to establishing a virtual space for health research, development, and care, putting Ohio's healthcare institutions at the forefront of new information technologies and delivery systems. These include the use of electronic medical records, "real time" telemedicine, and other communication innovations. The presence of such a dedicated network will position Ohio companies well to compete for new federal programs devoted to the development of new healthcare information technologies.

The benefits of such technological capabilities are widespread including increased efficiencies, stabilizing healthcare costs, healthy outcomes, and enhanced delivery of care to currently underserved populations.

Conclusion

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will provide leadership for:

- Large and small businesses in Ohio who, in growing numbers, are expressing concern that the healthcare system in its current state is bad for business

- Healthcare providers, who must absorb the cost of providing services to a vast and growing number of uninsured individuals and families
- Consumers of medical care, who must navigate the healthcare system's complexities and pay ever-increasing premiums
- The vast and growing number of hard-working Ohioans who cannot afford even basic healthcare for themselves and their families.

The Turnaround Ohio Government Accountability Plan: Living Within Our Means, Investing In What Matters, and Demanding Results

Turnaround Ohio aims to keep the jobs we have by investing in Ohio's strengths while bringing us the jobs of the future by making sure we have the best educated and capable workforce possible.

Our priorities are clear. And The Ohio Government Accountability Plan demonstrates how we will live within our means and invest in what matters by focusing on core goals and directing the entire state government and budget toward meeting those goals. It is our roadmap to a lean, competitive, modern government that is a critical player in Ohio's economic growth.

Unfortunately, Ohio's current budget process simply recycles the previous budget without considering whether or not existing programs are working or the money being spent is furthering the goals of the people of Ohio. While there may be a few incremental changes, we largely do the same thing from biennium to biennium, making it harder for new and effective ideas to break through. The Strickland-Fisher Government Accountability Plan will lead us away from the repeated, thoughtless funding of mediocre programs. Instead, we will fund programs that are most valued and take us toward our goals of keeping and growing jobs in this state.

The Accountable Government approach is simple but powerful. We will govern for results based on a focused set of priorities. Here is how we will do it:

1. Set Goals

Ted Strickland puts education and jobs at the center of Turnaround Ohio, with specific goals to:

Raise Ohio's per capita income rate above the national average for the first time since 1987 and reverse Ohio's job losses by investing in Ohio's strengths; and

Develop the jobs of the future by educating a strong, powerful workforce beginning with 230,000 more enrollees in education beyond high school and 20% more graduates over the next decade.

2. Ease the Burden of Regulations that Prohibit and Constrain Development in Ohio through "Advantage Ohio"

When government is inefficient, Ohio businesses and entrepreneurs pay the price. One specific area where this is especially true is the regulatory process. Ohioans, Ohio's businesses and those looking to invest in Ohio pay dearly each day a permit sits on a government desk. To give Ohio a competitive advantage, a Strickland-Fisher Administration will take on both Ohio's inefficient and drawn-out regulatory process as well as unnecessary, burdensome regulations themselves.

A Strickland-Fisher Administration, in partnership with Ohio's businesses and the General Assembly, will institute Advantage Ohio, an across-the-board review of current regulations, eliminating those that are unnecessary, redundant and contradictory while establishing regulatory performance standards that will make Ohio a competitive place to do business. As part of Advantage Ohio, a Strickland-Fisher Administration will take a common-sense approach to regulation and, under appropriate circumstances, waive penalties and fees for small businesses who are first-time offenders of regulatory noncompliance.

3. Create a Roadmap to Results

Require collaboration across government and beyond and create a plan to reach the state's goals.

4. Sign a Performance Contract with Every Department

Develop a performance contract with every state department to set priorities in line with the goals of the Governor and strategies to fund results.

5. Budget for Results

Budget for results and focus on key strategies to reach those results. Today, we pay for far too much that we don't really want: job training for jobs that don't exist and a health care system that doesn't help people stay well and then pays dearly when they inevitably fall ill. We can do better, and we will.

The Governor and the Office of Budget and Management will start with a realistic look at how much money we have. Then priority funding must be for programs that will produce the core results that the public and Turnaround Ohio is committed to achieving. The Governor will work with the General Assembly to ensure that his priorities are accomplished.

These core results will drive the Strickland-Fisher Administration's "Results Teams" to meet a specified set of goals for major state expenditures across agencies. Each team will include all Directors of departments that have some impact on the Administration's core business results, joined by top experts in relevant fields from the public and private sector.

In addition to achieving key high-priority results, Directors of each department will be required to prioritize all their programs and initiatives and to fund them efficiently and effectively.

6. Establish a Priority Investment Fund

The Strickland-Fisher Administration will create a Priority Investment Fund to concentrate all savings, budget growth and underutilized funds on the priority strategies to turn around Ohio. In doing so, we can budget for impact and the results that will return Ohio to prosperity while continuing to live within our means.

A Strickland-Fisher Administration will take fiscal responsibility seriously. Therefore, we have priced each of the proposals in the Turnaround Ohio plan and have identified funding that allows us to invest in what matters and live within our means. Most of the proposals do not require new general revenue fund dollars. Where they do, savings from a top-to-bottom performance review of state government, power purchasing of products and services, lean business processes produced from regulatory reform, prevention strategies in healthcare and performance contracts that produce efficiencies, as well as natural revenue growth will be used. We will maximize and re-prioritize underutilized federal funds and bond proceeds for the remainder.

7. Create a State Scorecard

The Turnaround Ohio Government Accountability Plan transforms the way Ohio taxpayer dollars are spent. And the taxpayers will always know precisely how it is working. The Strickland-Fisher team will issue an annual Results Scorecard that will provide complete information about how money has been spent, and how many steps closer we have come toward reaching our priority results. The results, both good and bad, will be reported and the Administration will seek the input of the public about how we can see even more improvement.

Making Ohio a Place that Our Past and Present Military Want to Call Home

Ohio has a proud history of its sons and daughters serving in our nation's armed forces. In fact, Ohio is home to over 1 million veterans and tens of thousands more who are serving today. Over 50% of Ohio's National Guard members have answered the call to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as recent national disasters such as Hurricane Katrina. It is these men and women that have sacrificed for us all. And it is these men and women who deserve a Governor to stand with them and stand for them, recognizing their service and fulfilling the promises made by a grateful nation and a grateful state.

I am proud of my record in support of those who have worn the uniform and those who wear the uniform on our behalf today. As Governor one of my highest priorities will be to make Ohio known for its commitment to its past and present military community. And here is how I'll start:

Work to Elevate and Expand the Office of Veterans' Affairs to a Cabinet Level Agency and Create the Ohio Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA)

For too long, Ohio's veterans have not been receiving the support or the services they deserve. They have not been a priority to this state. As Governor, I will ensure every Ohioan who has served in our nation's armed forces knows about the benefits they have earned and to which they are entitled. My Director of ODVA, though separate from the Ohio National Guard, will have a strong working relationship with the Adjutant General.

It is my promise to work closely with my Director of Veterans' Affairs and the veterans' service organizations to coordinate and develop the "Promises Kept" outreach initiative and make it a top priority. Through my "Promises Kept" initiative, the ODVA will actively seek out Ohio's veterans and military retirees to ensure they are receiving the federal and state veterans' benefits to which they are entitled. Unfortunately, the federal government has not been reaching out to veterans in this way and, in fact, the VA has issued a "gag order" on outreach activities. During my time in Congress, I have aggressively fought to overturn this moratorium on veterans outreach and have even brought a lawsuit against the VA. Ohio falls below the national average for veterans who use the VA health care system. One of the ways my "Promises Kept" initiative will work to reverse this shameful statistic is by establishing a toll-free resource hotline specifically for veterans and military families to obtain information related to state and federal rights, benefits and services. My "Promises Kept" initiative will also focus on informing our returning servicemen and women about their eligibility for veterans' benefits.

Advocate the support of the Ohio Military Injury Relief Fund. The State of Ohio Military Injury Relief Fund was passed into law in 2005 and allows Ohioans to donate some or all of their tax return to the hundreds of Ohioans who have been injured while serving under Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom. This program also allows direct contribution to this fund. However, there is little or no publicity or reporting about this fund. So far only 16,000 have contributed.

Stand Proudly in Support of Ohio's Veterans, Military Retirees and Military

As Governor, I will personally work closely with the ODVA and will use the influence of the Governor's Office as a "bully pulpit" to champion the rights of veterans, military retirees and current military personnel. As a Member of Congress and a Member of the Veterans Affairs Committee, I have been very vocal in my advocacy for concurrent receipt and mandatory funding for veterans' health care. I have adamantly opposed increases in veterans' co-payments and any enrollment fees and have been supportive of expanding Tri-Care, the military's health care system, to members of the National Guard and Reserves, regardless of their activation status. As Governor, I will continue my fight by:

Using the Governor's office as a means to ensure that Ohio's laws are, at a minimum, consistent with federal military and veterans' protections. In addition, I will support our new veterans by educating private and public employers and our universities on the rights of deploying military personnel and veterans and enforcing those protections.

Influencing national leaders on federal policies affecting Ohio's veterans. Over the last several years and even at a time of war, the current administration has not given veterans the benefits they deserve—in fact, they've done the opposite. In Fiscal Year 2005, nearly 10,000 Ohio veterans applied for VA health care and got turned down because they were classified as priority 8. (The current administration is denying all new veterans in this category access to VA health care.) I will be a vocal advocate for veterans at the federal level to right these wrongs.

As Governor, I will fight to reduce the VA's claims backlog. This backlog continues to grow and prevents veterans from receiving services and compensation they need and deserve. Ohio needs a Governor who has the leadership to fight to improve timeliness and accuracy on disability claims.

Fighting for Ohio's veterans is not a new challenge for me. While a member of the Veterans Affairs Committee, I have stood proudly with the veterans' service organizations time and time again to support full and guaranteed funding for veterans' health care and to ensure that we have adequate veterans' health care facilities in Ohio. Through my work on the VA Committee, I was instrumental in securing funds for the new VA medical facility in Columbus. Access to the expertise at our VA health care facilities is especially crucial to our veterans, including our new veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, who experience very specific health challenges as a result of their service including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and complications from chemical exposures, and I work to ensure this access.

Based on my experience in Congress, I understand funding for veterans must be a bipartisan effort—that is why I will work with the General Assembly to ensure adequate and timely funding for state veterans programs. Additionally, my goal is to add at least two new State Veterans' Homes. I will work to secure state and federal resources to support these homes and other long-term care needs of our veterans.

Making Ohio the place that veterans and military retirees want to call home after they have completed their service. To that end, I will work to exclude military-retiree pensions from the state income tax to make Ohio a more welcoming state to veterans and retired military. This exemption will encourage residency in Ohio and bring the skills of those recently separated from the military—some who are looking for second careers as young retirees—to our state.

Working with Ohio's public colleges and universities to cover 75% of tuition costs for qualifying Ohio veterans. Many veterans receive some type of tuition guarantee, including the federal Montgomery GI bill. However, these guarantees are outdated and now only pay for a small fraction of tuition costs. I will create the Ohio VetEd program, which will augment these tuition guarantees up to 75% of tuition for qualifying honorably discharged veterans who are Ohio residents at the time of enrollment into an institution. (Estimated costs, \$27 million.)

I have already demonstrated my commitment to expanding adult education opportunities so that we can build a workforce in Ohio that will allow us to keep and grow jobs. The hardworking men and women who have served in our armed forces, many of whom already have specialized training from their military service, are exactly the type of people we want in Ohio's workforce. Investing in those who have served is an investment in Ohio's future.

Valuing veterans preference in hiring practices and upholding this policy as Governor. I also support priority in job-training programs and will support veterans with new and small businesses.

I will work with the Ohio Housing Finance Agency and the Department of Development to target housing benefits, including the first time home-buyer program and down-payment assistance, to veterans and emergency rent and mortgage assistance to those who are currently serving and experiencing financial hardships because of their deployments.

Lead the National Guard

I take seriously the responsibility and leadership that the Governor of Ohio has over the Ohio National Guard. Working with Ohio's Adjutant General, I will see to it that our Guard is fully trained, equipped and supported. As Governor, I will champion and improve on the existing services and protections for our National Guard members including the tuition scholarship program that is offered to those attending our state colleges and universities.

Over the past several years, Ohio has seen more than 50% of our National Guard personnel deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq. As our men and women in our National Guard are asked to sacrifice more, we should increase our support for them as they struggle with returning and reintegrating back into their families, communities and jobs. Every member of Ohio's Guard is owed a smooth transition after his or her deployment. And I will partner with the Adjutant General to continue the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Program, ensuring that when our citizen soldiers and airmen return home, the jobs they vacated when deployed to defend our freedoms are waiting for them. In addition, I will be a strong advocate of the Family Readiness Program, ensuring the families of our

troops are supported while their loved ones are in harms way. I will also ensure that other members of my cabinet and Ohio's agencies, such as the Ohio Department of Mental Health and the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services, are working effectively together through the Ohio Cares Program to give our National Guard members any assistance they need.

Finally, I will work to preserve and expand the missions of Ohio's military units during the federal Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process that is underway. BRAC will especially have a great effect on the future of our Guard, and I will be an advocate for maintaining and increasing the strength of our military forces.

Learning for Life: High-Quality Education for High-Quality Jobs

Turnaround Ohio is the Strickland/Fisher strategy to move our state in the right direction. The plan aims to keep and grow the jobs we have by investing in Ohio's strengths, such as energy production, innovation and entrepreneurship, and bring the jobs of the future by making sure Ohio has the most-educated workforce possible—because, in the future, jobs will go where the workforce is best educated.

To turnaround Ohio and give all Ohioans and their families an opportunity to better themselves, we must sharply increase the percentage of Ohioans who go on to complete college, certification or other training and make sure that high-quality jobs are awaiting them when they do so. We must change our entire attitude about the importance of lifelong learning. Ohioans must be able to access a fluid, continuous learning system – one that provides a seamless progression from early childhood through higher education and on, with each step in the progression equal in value. We must set high goals, raise aspirations and expectations and open the doors for every Ohioan to the learning environments that will challenge and prepare our next generation.

With Turnaround Ohio, a Strickland/Fisher Administration will work to achieve the following goals:

Every young child in Ohio has a fair start and will start school with the physical, social, emotional and learning tools they'll need to succeed in the classroom and throughout their lives.

All public schools are genuine learning communities – both student-centered and relevant to today's world – with a challenging curriculum that raises aspirations and academic preparation and provides high-quality teaching.

Every Ohioan who graduates high school will have a deposit in Ohio's Knowledge Bank that will help fund his or her postsecondary education and that will allow family, friends, businesses, charities and the state to help.

230,000 more Ohioans will enroll in the state's public and private universities during the next 10 years.

Ohio's success rate (those who graduate with a two or four year degree) will be improved by 20% in the next 10 years.

Turnaround Ohio will work to:

By 2017, increase enrollment in the state's public and private colleges and universities by 230,000 and raise the SUCCESS rate (that is, graduations and degree attainment) by 20% during the same period.

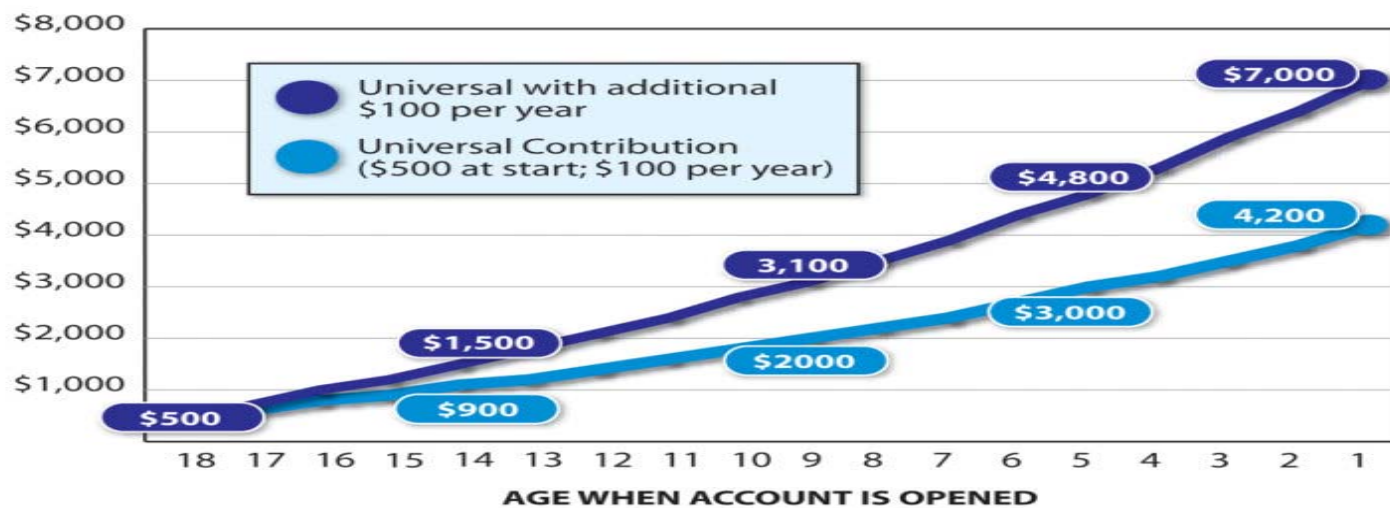
We need to build a culture in Ohio that promotes our kids going to college. Too few Ohio youngsters even think they can go to college. Too few kids stay in Ohio for school and too few can afford to finish post-secondary education. If we are to build an Ohio

economy with plenty of high-wage jobs of the future, we need to transform the way in which Ohio families think about education. We need our kids to aspire to go to college and to believe they can afford it. Therefore, a Strickland/Fisher Administration will work to:

1. Create the Ohio Knowledge Bank. One barrier to increasing the number of graduates in Ohio is affordability. But statistics show us that simply throwing money at the problem doesn't increase college going rates. At an early age, students must aspire to go to college and believe that college is an option for them. Ohio's Knowledge Bank addresses both affordability and aspirations by depositing money into every Ohio child's college savings account. With modest investments, Ohio's Knowledge Bank has the potential to transform our state's attitudes about college accessibility.

Currently, Ohioans investing in a 529 college savings account (administered through the Ohio Tuition Trust Authority) are socking away savings for their children's college careers. They opened these accounts with a deposit of as little as \$15. A Strickland/Fisher Administration will aim to supplement those savings with Ohio's Knowledge Bank and vastly increase the number of Ohioans participating in the program and benefiting from its advantages.

Under our proposal, when a 529 college savings account is opened for a child, the state will deposit \$500 in a parallel Knowledge Bank account for that child and will contribute \$100 every year after until that child graduates from high school. Additionally, those who qualify for needs-based assistance (which we define as those children who are TANF eligible as well as those at 200% of poverty or below) will get an additional \$100 per year contributed to their accounts. The state's contribution can be used for college, certification or other training in Ohio. This will stem the tide of students today who leave Ohio to go to other states where education is less costly.



With the state's contributions as a catalyst, parents, family members, Ohio's businesses, religious organizations and foundations—every entity in Ohio that sees the importance of higher education and wants to contribute to educating our future workforce—can then contribute additional funds. With this coalition of family, community and government supporting them from the beginning, students will realize that they in fact have an opportunity for higher education and that their family, community and state believes in them and is already investing in their future.

Another important result of depositing this money early is the magic of compound interest. By investing early in a child's life, we can expect the savings account to mature over the years therefore paying an even larger percentage of higher education expenses.

2. Establish Tuition Guarantees to ensure tuition predictability. A Strickland/Fisher Administration will work with institutions of higher education to establish two- and four-year tuition guarantees in exchange for state support.

3. Create a Truth in Tuition policy. A Strickland/Fisher Administration will work with Ohio's institutions of higher education to bring transparency to education expenses so students know all the charges they will incur over their time at an institution before entering.

4. Establish the “Ohio Open Door Card.” As outlined in our Skills for High Quality Jobs announcement, a Strickland/Fisher Administration will work to issue an “Ohio Open Door Card” to every Ohio adult learner. The card will show in one place all their learning accomplishments, while opening the door to every funding source each individual qualifies for. Learners will be able to use this one card to access the maximum state and federal benefits possible to support their learning at the institution of their choice. And the card will allow counselors and advisors to focus on the needs of their clients, not learning an arcane and complicated system. The card would be made available to Ohio adult learners at every state-funded training provider: community and technical colleges, adult career centers, career-technical centers, One-Stop Career Centers, and other job training programs. Development of this information system will be funded through the administrative functions across the 4 agencies and 15 programs that currently comprise Ohio's workforce training system.

5. Expand local college access services to every Ohio middle-school and high-school student as well as adults who want to improve their lives by enhancing their job skills. College access programs provide one-on-one advising and other services primarily to students who too often, because of social or economic circumstances, do not pursue higher education and to adult students who want to improve their lives. Currently, Ohio's 30 college access programs serve nearly half of Ohio's 612 school districts.

To raise Ohioans' awareness of the value of higher education and continuous learning and to increase aspirations and academic preparation for learning beyond high school, a Strickland/Fisher Administration will work to:

Offer challenge grants to local Ohio College Access Network (OCAN) organizations to help leverage resources, establish new partnerships with education stakeholders ranging from middle school through postsecondary and build capacity at the local level to facilitate strategic dialogue around what needs to happen in order to help more citizens achieve success. Additionally, we will work to increase college participation and success rates by building upon the existing infrastructure of OCAN and the Ohio Appalachian Center for Higher Education (OACHE) and establishing Regional Centers of College Access & Success in the state's 61 rural counties, especially in Appalachian Ohio. Building upon existing local programs and regional "umbrella" organizations, a Strickland/Fisher Administration will work to connect effective postsecondary awareness and outreach programs. We will also work to increase college persistence and completion rates among Ohio's most "at risk" students (including low-income, first-generation, non-traditional students) through the creation of College Success Partnerships. These partnerships between local community-based OCAN programs and higher education institutions support students through the most critical transition period from secondary or work to postsecondary and continue through the first year of college in order to ensure the student is able to access the resources and support necessary to succeed. College Success Partnerships will serve as the "one-stop-shop" to find information and get additional funding and academic support for postsecondary success. Finally, a Strickland/Fisher Administration will continue state funding for the federally-supported GEAR UP "Lighthouse" pilot program that is implementing comprehensive strategies for increasing the number of students who aspire to, prepare for and successfully experience college.

Twenty two-year challenge grants (requiring 1:1 community match) of \$50,000 per year will cost \$1 million a year. \$500,000 per year will support the expansion of the OCAN infrastructure. The creation of five Regional Centers will cost approximately \$1.75 million for the first year. Each Regional Center will reach approximately 15,000 Ohioans. The College Success Partnerships program will cost \$1 million annually. Together, these initiatives will cost \$4.25 million for the first year with a local match of approximately \$1 million a year.

6. Give high school students an opportunity to get a jump on college and other forms of postsecondary education. The final two years of high school are an important intersection between P-12 education and either postsecondary education or the world of work. Yet, for too many of our students – both those who are achieving at high levels and those who are struggling to find the relevance of going to school – these years are filled with detours and barriers that make the transition from high school to the rest of life a challenging if not debilitating experience. A Strickland/Fisher Administration will work to bridge the gaps between high school and advanced learning by:

Supporting Early College High Schools. A Strickland/Fisher Administration will continue support for current, as well as new, Early College High Schools in Ohio. Early College High Schools are small schools from which students leave with both a high school diploma and either an Associate's degree or two years of college credit toward a Bachelor's degree. It will seek to sustain national foundations' substantial support for this initiative, which is changing the structure of the high school years and compressing the number of years to a college degree.

Early College High Schools help students press toward the education and experience they need to succeed in life. While this initiative may require \$1 to \$2 million a year in state start-up and planning dollars, a recent California study concluded that Early College High Schools can save money rather than raise costs.

Doubling Participation in Postsecondary Enrollment Options. A Strickland/Fisher Administration will work to expand dual enrollment opportunities, such as Ohio’s Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program that promotes rigorous academic pursuits and provides qualified high school students with opportunities to experience courses at the college or university level. Dual enrollment opportunities give students a true college experience and prepare them for the academic rigors of college by exposing them to the type of intensive curriculum that research says promotes bachelor’s degree attainment. Because the current system creates serious financial disincentives – not for students, but for the high schools that lose state funding when their students take college courses, a Strickland/Fisher Administration will work with state legislators to DOUBLE enrollment in PSEO by crafting a weighted funding system that minimizes existing financial disincentives. Last year, the state of Utah developed a concurrent enrollment program that supports 22,384 students at a cost of just over \$5 million a year.

Ensure all students graduate high school with an education that counts – one that prepares them for college success and for the high-skilled, high-wage jobs that will fuel Ohio’s future economic growth.

1. Provide a challenging, relevant curriculum. A Strickland/Fisher Administration will work to provide every child access to a strong foundational education consisting of high expectations, a challenging curriculum and appropriate learning support systems. That curriculum will include challenging courses in English language arts – both reading and writing, mathematics, science, social studies, and courses that build students’ knowledge of foreign language skills, the fine arts, and the technology skills that are required in postsecondary education and the workplace – whether the student is enrolled in a college prep, College Tech Prep or career technical program.

The future of our children and of our state depends on closing “the preparation gap.” No longer will a challenging, high-quality education be available only to those students who are socially or economically privileged. The underlying premise – and the underlying promise – of our position is a firm belief that all children, regardless of race, ethnicity, geographic location or socioeconomic background should, and will, receive an education that challenges them, supports them and prepares them for success.

2. Improve the Assessment of Student Achievement. Standardized testing is in a state of crisis both in Ohio and across the nation. Recognizing that high standards and assessments of students’ achievement against these standards can encourage students and teachers to aspire for higher levels of performance, we will bring educators, parents and business leaders together to evaluate and make changes in the way Ohio measures the performance of its students and schools. A Strickland/Fisher Administration will provide leadership for a comprehensive review of testing strategies – a serious look at what we are doing right, what we are doing wrong and what we could be doing better and promote changes consistent with five key principles.

There should be multiple assessments because not everything can be measured through paper-and-pencil tests.

No “high-stakes” decisions that affect a student’s educational opportunities or life prospects should be made on the basis of a single test score.

The primary purpose of assessments should be to strengthen instruction and improve student achievement – so tests should provide timely feedback to students, parents and teachers that identify areas of academic progress and targets student needs.

The move to “value-added” assessments with their emphasis on student progress should be accelerated.

Assessments should have “external validity,” which means they should be valued and trusted by colleges and universities, as well as employers in Ohio.

3. Ensure that Ohio students have high-quality teaching and instruction in every classroom. The research is clear: the single most important thing that a school can provide is a skilled and knowledgeable teacher. Therefore, a Strickland/Fisher Administration will seek funding incentives to public colleges and universities for:

preparing primary and secondary teachers who teach in subject areas where there is a documented shortage of quality instructors (e.g., science, mathematics and special education), and

producing teacher education graduates (both teachers and principals) who agree to work in “hard-to-staff” schools (i.e., schools with high rates of teacher turnover, high proportions of under-prepared teachers and low rates of student achievement).

Funding will be available through a “Challenge” program that requires campuses to document their performance and to match state grants (at a level to be determined) as a condition for receiving incentive funding. The state’s investments can be used to reduce tuition costs for participating students and to support campuses’ program operations.

The state’s financial support will be set at \$4,000 per teacher prepared per year, with a target of preparing 250 new teachers a year. We will also call on colleges and universities to match the state’s investment at some level. We will invest in 250 students the first year (\$1 million), 500 students the second (\$2 million), 750 the third (\$3 million) and 1000 the fourth year (\$4 million).

4. Support teachers who pursue National Board Certification. Historically, the state has supported National Board Certification (NBC) as a measure for accomplished teaching. There are more than 2,500 Ohio teachers who hold National Board Certification. In the past, the state helped to pay the application fee for teachers who want to become certified by the National Board for Professional

Teaching Standards (approximately \$2,500). The state also gives these teachers an annual stipend for the life of their initial license (again, approximately \$2,500 a year). Recent reductions in the payment of fees and annual stipends threaten the size of Ohio's pool of these highly accomplished teachers. A Strickland/Fisher Administration will work to restore these incentives and:

Reward those who attain National Board Certification; and

Encourage school districts to engage National Board Certified teachers in ways that add value beyond their own classrooms including mentoring other educators and professional development.

5. Engage communities and schools in addressing the 'silent epidemic' of school dropouts. School dropouts cost Ohio's economy \$8 billion a year. Leaving school without a diploma deprives them of needed knowledge and skills, just as it means they will have fewer good choices throughout their lives. Very simply, the future is one of rising peril for dropouts. They are likely to have low lifetime earnings and higher incarceration rates, and there is a high likelihood that their children will drop out of high school and start the cycle anew.

Research suggests that nearly one out of three public high school students won't graduate. It is a serious problem – a “silent epidemic” in the words of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. But research tells us that the problem is not getting worse – or better. Instead, the numbers of dropouts have remained unchecked at approximately 30 percent through two decades of education reform. And for most of this time the magnitude of the problem has been largely ignored. A Strickland/Fisher Administration won't ignore school dropouts, and it won't tolerate school practices that turn challenging students into “pushouts.” Instead, it will challenge educators, families and communities to give these young people a second chance. We must give a voice and attention to this silent problem and a Strickland/Fisher Administration will involve all stakeholders in developing a comprehensive, multi-faceted strategy to help these students get a high school diploma.

Ensure stable, secure funding for education.

For many years, Ohio has experienced an education funding crisis, both in K-12 education and in continued decline of state support for post-secondary education. A Strickland/Fisher Administration will bring all parties together to craft a new method of funding schools that is consistent with the demands of the Ohio Constitution. That's what law-abiding governors and law-abiding states do. They accept their moral, ethical and public responsibility to do so to prepare our children for prosperous, successful lives in an ever-changing world. We must continue to look at every option to save money, reduce waste and duplication and redirect spending to these priorities. And we must continue to grow our economy as a way to supplement funding.

The following principles should guide our discussions:

Any funding solution must be directly linked to increased quality of education and real accountability.

The formulas that are used to allocate state resources must be fair and simplified.

Find a proper balance between state and local responsibility for funding our K-12 system and modify the property tax to make it a fairer and more reliable source of revenue.

Any solutions should support a strong and effective P-16 education system. Education has been in silos in this state for far too long. We must align education, not isolate each sector of the system. We must focus on closing existing achievement and opportunity gaps, not fight over turfs. And we must respond to the learning needs of all Ohioans, not maintain the status quo.

Most importantly, there must be community outreach and involvement in order to insure the best solutions possible and bipartisan cooperation. Any further solution to our education funding issues will take intense negotiations with members of the state legislature and other stakeholders no matter which party is in control after this year's elections. Too much of our public debate is unnecessarily partisan. We need to acknowledge that these are complex and difficult issues, with no silver bullets or quick fixes. We must reject appeals to our deepest fears and worst instincts and approaches that seek to divide us. Instead, we must work collaboratively and relentlessly for sensible solutions.

Funding for 1st Year:

Below is the total we plan to invest in these proposals. We believe we can provide the \$247.75 million in GRF funds from cost savings garnered from efficiencies gained elsewhere in state government, such as Medicaid. The additional \$108 million we invest in the Knowledge Bank for low-income families can come from TANF.

Investment in Knowledge Bank (for first year only—in subsequent years the cost decreases): \$236 million from GRF and \$108 million from TANF

Investment in Local College Access initiatives: \$4.25 million

Investment in Cost of Early College High Schools: \$1.5 million

Investment in Post Secondary Enrollment Options: \$5 million

Investments in incentives to higher institutions to train teachers for hard-to-staff subjects and schools: \$1 million

Total GRF: \$247.75 million

Total TANF: \$108 million

Jobs Worthy of Ohioans: The Strickland/Fisher Strategy for Job Creation in Ohio

Turnaround Ohio is the Strickland/Fisher strategy to move our state in the right direction. The plan aims to keep and create jobs that grow from Ohio's strengths and that are worthy of Ohio's workers. We will invest in Ohio's assets, build the skills that will compete in a global economy, and unleash the creativity and innovation that built our state. Turnaround Ohio will bring our state the jobs of the future by making sure Ohio has the most-educated workforce possible—because, in the future, jobs will go where the workforce is best educated. Our Turnaround Ohio plan focuses on the unbreakable connection between jobs and education. When we forge that connection, we will create a cycle of success for every Ohioan.

The Strickland/Fisher Strategy for Job Creation in Ohio proposal meets a number of Turnaround Ohio's most important goals: developing the jobs of the future, providing opportunities for our young people, boosting the wages of Ohio workers, promoting better labor relations, spurring entrepreneurship and enterprise expansion, and renewing the state's economic infrastructure. With these goals, we can raise the incomes of all Ohioans and propel our economy into the 21st century.

Ohio's jobs and economic development policy must reflect the realities of Ohio today. As Governor Rhodes used to say, "Ohio is a state that makes things and grows things." Our great state is the 7th largest US state economy, the 3rd largest manufacturing state in the US (after Texas, before Michigan), the 4th largest producer of durable goods (after Texas, before Indiana).¹ And our state is 7th in production of bio-resources.² Yet, despite this prowess, and the accompanying gains in productivity and education over the last decade, there are still major challenges ahead:

By almost every critical measure, Ohio is headed in the wrong direction, and we are in serious danger of becoming a second or third-tier state. Ohio is losing jobs and brains.

On an average day, 45 more people leave our state than move into it. Since 1960, Ohio's population has grown 16% while the nation's population has grown more than 50%. Since 2000, Ohio's population has grown less than 1%;³

The real wages of Ohio's workers have continued to decline. In 2003, Ohio's per capita income was 5% below the US average;⁴

228,656 jobs have been lost between 2001-2004; Ohio is in its 120th month below the national averages in job growth;⁵

Ohio ranks 50th out of 50 states and the District of Columbia in its ability to attract and hold onto well-educated young people ages 19-24;⁶ and

Ohio ranks 50th in small business ownership rates.⁷

Our Turnaround Ohio plan starts with having the right attitude. Incremental change will not be enough. Transformational change will be required to turnaround our state. Today, Ohio is going through a period of dynamic change, comparable in scale and complexity to the dawn of the automotive age – the age that made Ohio the crucible of the American industrial revolution. Globalization, technology and innovation are restructuring our economy. These forces have accelerated the shift of Ohio’s economy from the manufacturing of goods to the conception, design, marketing and delivery of goods, services and ideas. Innovation, entrepreneurship, knowledge, flexibility and creativity now drive our economy. To compete in this new world, and again become the crucible of our next economic revolution will require us to align Ohio’s policies to new global rules of economic prosperity and success. We must keep reinventing ourselves with new products, services, companies, industries, and jobs. Our economic prosperity will depend on the success of our major driver industries to serve global markets.

What are these new rules of economic prosperity and success? Our economy is based on knowledge, which means that our investments in universities, medical research centers and higher education institutions are critical to our business base. For this reason, our citizens and leaders were wise to focus investment on the Third Frontier Initiative. But that is not enough – now we need to build on that base.

We also need to continue to boost new and growing industry sectors in Ohio and take advantage of the work of countless economic development, business and labor leadership groups that have already shown us the way. We need to take some calculated risks to make new industries the heart of Ohio’s future. As the third biggest energy user⁸ in the country, Ohio has the resources, the skills, the technology and the manufacturing capability to be a major energy producer in the next decade. For this reason, a comprehensive energy and jobs strategy was the first component announced in the Turnaround Ohio plan.

We need to create a business climate that is favorable to Ohio businesses and provides support to Ohio workers to pursue new job, business, entrepreneurship and education opportunities. Ohio’s fiscal, regulatory and tax policies must support high quality jobs, business growth, and healthy capital formation.

As leaders, we must create a state vision for economic competitiveness and development and then apply it across all state programs. We will ensure that every department of state government, not just the Department of Development, is evaluated first and foremost by its ability to keep, attract, and create jobs worthy of Ohio’s workers. Our success will require that every part of Ohio’s state government work together to focus on achieving the same overriding goal.

For example, we must use the state’s capital budget to invest in the infrastructure and physical investments needed to put our cities and towns at the heart of our state’s turnaround strategy. The state’s capital budget must be used as an economic development tool that strategically connects our investments in physical capital to our strategic investments in human capital.

Despite our challenges, there is much to be hopeful about. The proposals in this document, as they are outlined more fully below, will empower Ohio to reach toward the following goals:

By 2015, raise Ohio's per capita income rate above the national average for the first time since 1987;

By 2010, achieve job growth that is equal to or exceeds the national average;

Move Ohio up from the very bottom rank of small business ownership, from 50th to 25th;

Refocus 75% of every economic development dollar on regional economic development and priorities.

First, to take aggressive action to create Jobs Worthy of Ohioans, the Strickland/Fisher Administration will:

- 1.) Establish the Governor's Business Council.** Business leaders from every city and region will be invited to meet quarterly to provide insight and ideas on how government and businesses can work together to create a supportive business climate in our state.
- 2.) Create the Ohio First Initiative.** A Strickland/Fisher Administration will provide what it takes for growing Ohio companies to expand in Ohio. And the state should lead by example, using Ohio firms first where it makes sense to do so. Like other states, we need to use the power of the state's procurement system to anchor jobs, skills and competitive industries in our communities. We should take steps to tie selection of state contractors to the quality and quantity of jobs those vendors have in Ohio.
- 3.) Establish the 24-Hour Response Line.** We will expand Ohio's Business Gateway so that it provides comprehensive on-line access to Ohio business assistance, regulation and economic development resources. Every business inquiry to the state will be answered centrally at a single point of contact and a response provided to the business within 24 hours.
- 4.) Create the Governor's Ohio Jobs Strike Force, connecting businesses and workers in crisis with the capital, tools and training needed to rebound from economic crisis.** This Strike Force will be lodged in the Governor's office and in cooperation with Ohio's business and labor leaders, will develop an early warning system, so we can deploy state resources when it is most needed – not just after the announcement hits the press.
- 5.) Aggressively promote Ohio businesses in world markets.** In order to compete globally, we must think globally. As Governor of the State, I will be an ambassador for Ohio's businesses and seek out opportunities in emerging markets as well as aggressively market Ohio as a desirable location for foreign-owned companies. By creating an environment that encourages innovation and capitalizing upon the core competencies of our small to medium sized businesses, we can increase the presence of Ohio in the world marketplace.

Second, the Strickland/Fisher Administration will build on our strengths and grow Ohio's business base in Ohio.

Today, 75% of new capital investments come from outside Ohio⁹. We don't want less outside investment – but it is essential that we increase the investments of our own, homegrown businesses in Ohio's economy – whether a large Fortune 500 company, or an innovative start-up down the street.

While retaining and growing businesses in Ohio's largest industries and firms is critical, we also need to look to the jobs of our future. In many of our cities and towns, small and medium-sized businesses are the only type of businesses that are gaining jobs in Ohio. These innovative, niche companies provide the backbone for dynamism in Ohio's economy and point the way to future growth and development.

To realize this potential, we will:

- 1.) Encourage new businesses and new jobs through robust startup and small business expansion services, including basic entrepreneurship services, business start-up workshops and technical assistance to companies in their critical early stages.** For businesses ready to grow, we will provide the expansion and high growth services they need to reach their full potential. It is essential that Ohio's high school career centers, community and technical colleges, career and technical education centers, and adult workforce career centers reach into all corners of the state and provide entrepreneurship training and business skill development and help Ohioans turn their desires for a job into a desire to start a business that they control.
- 2.) Make sure capital is available to provide growth and job security.** Third Frontier Funds are waiting to be used effectively, and we must use them to provide capital for businesses that need to expand or grow in key industries of the future. These funds would provide mezzanine capital to small businesses, leverage capital raised by angel networks throughout the state, and invest in small business expansion and succession.
- 3.) Help stabilize the single greatest barrier to growth and success today: escalating health care costs.** There is no aspect of personal or business life that is untouched by the painful realities of the health care crisis. There are no easy answers of course: it will take the determined partnership of health care executives, business owners, advocates, and the health care community itself to arrive at workable solutions. We have already begun a productive dialogue with all these stakeholders, which promises to yield exciting, innovative approaches that will be announced in the near future.

Third, the Strickland/Fisher Administration will regionalize economic development, putting decision-making and resources at the heart of Ohio’s high-growth regional networks.

Our state is blessed with diversity not only in culture, but in natural resources, agriculture, economic history, and business infrastructure. In fact, we have at least six distinctive regional economies – in the southwestern, Appalachian, northeastern, northwestern, and west central, and central areas of the state – as well as our farming areas that may well be our energy sources of the future. It is time we take advantage of the potential offered by this rich variety by respecting the value of each unique marketplace and supporting regional efforts to build their own future. Of course, we will also work to unite Ohio’s regional economic strengths so we can market Ohio’s success story throughout the nation and the world.

Strickland/Fisher Administration initiatives to keep investment and operational decision-making close to home include:

- 1.) Create Regional Enterprise Networks.** Each region will decide on its own key imperatives for a well-rounded local economic development strategy. Then, we will provide the blocks of capital, grants, workforce training and other resources to each Regional Enterprise Network. This will give them the resources and power to make their own decisions about how best to execute their strategies through local networks, capital access and capacities.
- 2.) Develop an Ohio Economic Growth Scorecard that builds in accountability through performance and outcome standards.** Indicators and benchmarks appropriate to the entire state and to each region will be developed in collaboration with business and labor leadership groups to maximize statewide accountability and local flexibility.
- 3.) Promote Regional Cooperation by empowering individual communities to lower the costs of providing services, boost business and stabilize the tax base, remove barriers to collaboration, pool resources, share successes, and provide incentives to work together.** Current law creates numerous barriers to effective regional cooperation. This needs to be changed, and, together with economic development leadership, we will develop, recommend, and advocate modifications to permit joint economic development districts, regional compacts or accords to help communities in the same regional, economic market to work together.
- 4.) Make a renewed workforce development and training system the core of our regional economic development.** As we work in each region to develop worthy jobs for Ohio workers, it is essential to be sure there are workers prepared to fill those particular jobs. Our Turnaround Ohio proposals on workforce development will invest \$400 million a year in demand-driven workforce education and training systems that work for Ohio’s workers and businesses.
- 5.) Promote reinvestment in Ohio’s older communities.** We cannot have a great state without great cities and urban areas. We must have a thriving, competitive urban core. Our urban agenda, which will be unveiled soon, will focus on making sure that Ohio’s cities, towns, and older suburbs have the tools they need to thrive. We will encourage smart land use policies and land reclamation and development, including innovative tools for brownfield redevelopment.

Fourth, the Strickland/Fisher Administration will bring order and accountability to Ohio's economic development programs and ensure that we are getting results.

In 2004, close to \$750 million were provided in abatements, incentives, training and grants to Ohio's private industry. Ohioans deserve solid results for their investment.

Here's how a Strickland/Fisher Administration will lead us to that goal:

- 1.) Establish a single “unified budget” for economic development.** The first requirement for us to address our economic future sensibly is knowledge. But today, it's virtually impossible to get a clear overall picture of who is getting what incentives and what promises have been made. All state agencies that control taxpayer development dollars, from Development, Transportation, and Agriculture, to the Board of Regents, Third Frontier Fund and more, will be required to publicly and comprehensively report subsidies to business, including business tax expenditures (exemptions, abatements, etc.), for public inspection and legislative review.
- 2.) Refocus incentives where they count most: job training and infrastructure, the key building blocks of development, asset and wealth building and competitiveness.** The Strickland/Fisher proposal for an Ohio Workforce Guarantee will provide free, customized training to any company that creates more than 20 jobs in a year. Our proposal for Broadband Ohio will create the infrastructure for all of Ohio's companies to compete in the new information economy. In the knowledge economy, cash incentives are less effective than those investments that are critical to our state's long-term competitiveness.
- 3.) Set and enforce job creation and investment goals.** Today, we tie incentives to jobs goals, but we need to do more. We need to encourage investment and productivity growth. We need to make sure these incentives are focused on the industries that are central to Ohio's future and will generate jobs worthy of Ohioans. Companies will report on performance of these goals in a timely manner, and the state will pay out incentives based upon how the company actually meets and sustains their job creation, investment, and productivity goals.
- 4.) Modernize Ohio's Enterprise Zone and tax incentive strategy to reflect changes in Ohio's economy and tax structure.** “Enterprise Zones” were created specifically to encourage economic growth in depressed urban or rural regions of the state. In 1983, Ohio had 14 enterprise zones. Today, we have at least 619. But from 1987 to 2004, the total of enterprise zone incentives going to these targeted areas dropped from 85% to just 38%. We need to take action to significantly reform and modernize this program to retarget these benefits to communities in need and to reflect changes in Ohio's economy and tax structure. The focus of the incentives for doing business in Ohio should be a competitive and fair business tax system that encourages productivity and innovation, economic development incentives that brings degraded worksites back on line, and tax incentives that reward innovation.

5.) Manage our revised tax structure wisely. Ohio has recently undergone a significant change in its tax structure, abolishing the Tangible Personal Property Tax and the Corporate Franchise Tax, and replacing them with the Commercial Activities Tax (CAT). The Strickland/Fisher Administration will continue to be in close contact with Ohio's business community as we determine the impact of the CAT. We need to assure that we continue to create the favorable business climate that Ohio companies need to expand and thrive.

SOURCES OF FUNDING:

These initiatives will be funded entirely out of current state and federal funding sources, and require no new GRF revenues. In particular, a Strickland/Fisher Administration will:

1. Restructure the Ohio Department of Development's loans, grants and workforce training programs so that the funds are allocated to six or more regional groups of counties.
2. Refocus Third Frontier bond funds to provide capital to small and medium-sized innovative businesses.
3. Reprioritize funds within the Ohio Department of Development to reflect the priorities of the Strickland/Fisher Turnaround Ohio Jobs and Economic Development Strategy.
4. Realize maximum administrative cost efficiencies by eliminating waste and duplication in antiquated information systems, and improving productivity.

REFERENCES:

"Industry-based Competitive Strategies for Ohio: Managing Three Portfolios for Economic Development Strengths", Deloitte Consulting and Cleveland State University, May 2005

"An Ohio Technology-Based Economic Development Strategy", Battelle Memorial Institute, 2003.

"Positioning Ohio and Its Research Institutions", Battelle Memorial Institute, 2005.

The U.S. Investment Monitor, Ernst and Young, September 2005.

"A Business Leader's Guide to Ohio Tax Reform", Ohio Business Roundtable, June 29, 2005

2006 Ohio Economic Development Association State Legislative Policy Agenda

Good Jobs First: Company Specific Disclosure Laws.

“The Role of Metro Areas in the US Economy”, Global Insight, Report prepared for the US Conference of Mayors, March 2006

CITES

- 1.) Energy Information Administration, US Department of Energy, 2004.
- 2.) Ohio Farm Bureau, 2006
- 3.) Cleveland Plain Dealer
- 4.) Ohio Labor Market Information Service, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
- 5.) Center for Community Solutions analysis
- 6.) State Science and Technology Institute, 2006.
- 7.) Corporation for Enterprise Development, Assets and Opportunity Scorecard, 2005
- 8.) Energy Information Administration, US Department of Energy
- 9.) US Investment Monitor, Ernst and Young, 2005

Learning for Life: Skills for High-Quality Jobs

Turnaround Ohio is the Strickland/Fisher strategy to move our state in the right direction. The plan aims to keep and grow the jobs we have by investing in Ohio's strengths, such as energy production, innovation and entrepreneurship, and the plan will bring the jobs of the future by making sure Ohio has the most-educated workforce possible—because, in the future, jobs will go where the workforce is best educated.

The third Turnaround Ohio proposal, Learning for Life: Skills for High-Quality Jobs, aims to help meet one of the plan's most important goals: making sure workers have access to lifelong education and that employers have access to well-trained workers.

Businesses tell us that the biggest obstacle they face in expanding and growing is their ability to attract and retain highly skilled and motivated employees. We need to face facts, and get Ohioans ready for the jobs of the 21st century. Ohio has 1.4 million adults with less than a high school diploma and an additional 1 million with some college, but no degree.

More than 60% of jobs that our businesses will create by the year 2012 will require some college education. Census data shows that just two years of education, such as an associate's degree, is worth \$400,000 to an adult who pursues additional education. And, as Ohio's economy continues its transition to a service and knowledge-oriented economy, recent SBA studies show that higher rates of educational attainment will result in higher small business survival rates.

Ohio spends about \$400 million a year on adult and workforce education and training. Our investments should be reaping tremendous rewards for our state, and helping us to create jobs, stimulate new business development and help companies to better meet the global competition of new markets. But they are not.

Far too many adult Ohioans find it daunting to return to school. And, as a result, far too many adult Ohioans don't have the skills to meet the needs of today's or tomorrow's workplace. We know that participation in high quality skills training, certification and post-secondary education will boost the incomes and job prospects for every Ohioan. We must make such opportunities available to all of our citizens.

We need a workforce development system in this state that is demand driven. Ohio must support sectors of the economy that are growing good jobs at a rapid pace. Our policies must engage aggressively with businesses to support them and build networks to grow the economy in Ohio's areas of strength: logistics, information, advanced manufacturing, health and early care, energy. And, in return, companies must provide workers living wages and career ladders that provide advancement in skills and responsibilities.

The record of other states such as Illinois, Georgia and North Carolina shows us that common sense investments in a system of workforce training and skills development will bring rewards to our state.

If Ohio had a well-functioning workforce development system, workers who want to return to school for training and education would be successfully getting the support they need. Businesses would be successfully locating employees—even moving here to Ohio—to get access to highly-skilled workers. Critical skills gaps would be quickly identified, and new programs would be developed to meet those needs. And programs which are underutilized and vacant would be reduced or eliminated. We can say few of these things about our workforce development system today.

All of the initiatives in this proposal can be funded entirely out of current state and federal funding sources, and require no new GRF revenues. What we need to do is make more effective use of the resources already available to us.

In particular, we need to maximize use of federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Rapid Response funds. Ohio ranks 51st of 52 states and territories in its use of federal WIA funds. According to the US Department of Labor, Ohio only spends 59% of what the federal government has allocated for workforce training, leaving over \$75 million on the table. In 2006, Ohio has \$17 million on hand in Rapid Response funds that have gone unused. Clearly, money is not the issue with Ohio's workforce training program. Lack of leadership is.

We can do better. We know how to link workforce training and education initiatives to business development priorities. We know how to start closing the jobs and economic development gap. We know how to invest the state's scarce resources to maximize economic return to taxpayers. But for too long, we've simply lacked the leadership needed to make it happen.

In order that every adult working Ohioan has access to the training resources and skills they need to secure a high quality job that will pay a living wage, we need to get Ohioans ready for jobs, and jobs ready for Ohioans. As governor, Ted Strickland will:

Getting Jobs Ready for Ohioans: Aggressively use Ohio's workforce development system to support Ohio's growth industries with high quality jobs.

Provide an Ohio Workforce Guarantee. For every business that creates more than 20 quality jobs per year, a Strickland administration would make available free customized training and education through our community colleges and technical colleges, in collaboration, where appropriate, with our adult career centers. From the perspective of the employee, training provided through the Ohio Workforce Guarantee will lead towards a credential to advance them through their career path. For existing businesses training incumbent workers that don't meet this job creation measure, we will continue to provide them with the Ohio Training Tax Credit and other ways to support their workforce investment. This program will cost about \$13.5-15 million a year to implement.

Target training resources to industries that provide high growth and good jobs. Direct workforce training programs to high growth industry sectors and clusters that are producing Ohio's high quality jobs, such as logistics, manufacturing, technology, health care, early care and education or teaching.

Develop the Ohio Skills Bank Program. Through a competitive grants process, provide significant flexible funding to regional industry sector training consortia to provide skills training and support to industry sectors facing critical skills shortages. This will be funded through WIA discretionary funding.

Create a curriculum that counts. Support community and technical colleges and Ohio's adult career centers to develop credit courses to boost entrepreneurship and business survival skills geared to small business owners, managers and workers. By reusing curriculum that has already been developed by colleges such as Lorain Community College and Cuyahoga Community College, and making it available through online distance learning, we believe that this will cost \$5 million.

Getting Ohioans Ready for Jobs: Make Ohio's workforce development system easy to use for those who most need it – Ohioans who want to learn, and Ohio businesses that need skilled workers.

Establish the "Ohio Open Door Card." Because nothing opens doors in life like a quality education, a Strickland administration will issue an "Ohio Open Door Card" to every Ohio adult learner. The card will show in one place all their learning accomplishments, while opening the door to every funding source each individual qualifies for. Learners will be able to use this one card to access the maximum state and federal benefits possible to support their learning at the institution of their choice. And the card will allow counselors and advisors to focus on the needs of their clients, not learning an arcane and complicated system. The card would be made available to Ohio adult learners at every state-funded training provider: community and technical colleges, adult career centers, career-technical centers, One-Stop Career Centers, and other job training programs. Development of this information system will be funded through the administrative functions across the 4 agencies and 15 programs that currently comprise Ohio's workforce training system.

Fully implement and expand AccelerateOhio, a free, entry level certificate that will certify to employers that Ohioans have the skills to get and keep a good job, and help give adult learners confidence in their ability to get a promotion, complete college or certification or move into another career track. The training and certification should be available online through Ohio's career and technical education centers, adult workforce career centers, high school career centers, community and technical colleges, WIA One-Stops, literacy community-based organizations. This will cost approximately \$20-25 million per year.

Expand online and distance learning. A Strickland administration would seek to double funding to boost Ohio's use of online and distance learning technologies. Highly-motivated students will be able to customize their educational experiences and earn college credit and other credentials through online, distance learning or other flexible course arrangements designed to meet the needs of busy adults holding fulltime jobs and raising families. This will be approximately \$12 million a year.

Use the bully pulpit to enlist business in our goals to encourage lifelong learning. Using gubernatorial leadership, a Strickland administration will marshal the resources to enlist business in our goals to boost Ohio's educational attainment. Many of the individuals in most need of basic literacy training are employed in a handful of industries, such as local government services, hospitality and retail. Develop a partnership program with these employers to give them full access to an online curriculum for workplace literacy skills, giving every Ohioan a "hand up" to a better opportunity. This will require no GRF funding.

Make Ohio's workforce development system a system that works. We invest \$400 million a year on workforce development and education and training in this state. A Strickland administration will ensure we get what we pay for.

Open the doors of education. Develop a clear pipeline that helps Ohioans understand how to successfully move from where they are, to the more advanced skills and opportunities they desire. Make every door the "right door" by creating a single entry point to the entire adult education and workforce system using an information system that will unify our workforce development system across 4 cabinet agencies and 15 programs. Ohio's workforce development system must be easy to access and easy to use, improving articulation and transfer, and making the entire system seamless and accessible to all. This is what the Ohio Open Door Card will do.

Help good jobs and qualified Ohioans find each other. A Strickland administration will use the best technology available to develop a first-class job matching system that successfully links Ohio businesses with qualified graduates and workers to fill their skills gaps, and provides job opportunities for its citizens. The current state job-matching system that unemployed Ohio workers are forced to use shows only a fraction of the jobs that available to them. For instance, as of March 3, 2006, the system listed 3,211 job openings. But private sector web engines show that there are 39,000 job openings in Ohio. In Stark County, the system shows that there are 17 jobs open in that region; another web engine tells us that there are 4,676 job openings in Stark County. Ohio can do better than that.

Provide quality workforce data to Ohio businesses. A Strickland administration will leverage better information tools to drive Ohio's workforce market. Ohio's workforce development system should be able to seamlessly track either a business's workforce need or an adult learner across multiple institutions, and allow them to access the maximum state and federal benefits possible to support their learning through their "Ohio Open Door Card". The governor and every CEO in Ohio should be able to use a real-time "dashboard" showing what matters most in our economy: how many Ohioans are seeking and finding the jobs they need, and how many businesses are meeting their workforce needs quickly and efficiently.

Consolidate and strengthen Ohio's workforce training system by rationalizing administration and funding of major adult education and workforce development programs at the state level. A single state agency should coordinate policies, funding, support mechanisms, and performance indicators for ABLE and GED programs, adult workforce education, and community and technical colleges.

SOURCES OF FUNDING:

These initiatives will be funded entirely out of current state and federal funding sources, and require no new GRF revenues. In particular, a Strickland administration will ensure Ohio maximizes its federal WIA and Rapid Response funds. Ohio ranks 51st of 52 states and territories in its use of federal WIA funds. According to the US Department of Labor, Ohio only spends 59% of what the federal government has allocated for workforce training, leaving over \$75 million on the table. In 2006, Ohio has \$17 million on hand in Rapid Response funds that have gone unused.

In addition, A Strickland administration will:

Optimize use of Federal Perkins funding support for non-credit courses, whether at adult career centers, community and technical colleges.

Use WIA discretionary funding to establish and fund the Ohio Skills Bank program for regional skills collaboratives (\$10-15 million), as well as the Accelerate Ohio certificate (\$20-25 million).

Use WIA administrative funding to support development of new management information tools to better operate and monitor the system.

Achieve administrative cost efficiencies by eliminating waste and duplication in antiquated information systems, and improving productivity.

REFERENCES:

“Average Isn’t Enough: Advancing Working Families to Create an Outstanding Ohio Economy”, Community Research Partners, November 2004

Ohio Organizational Survey on Services and Partnerships for Adult Postsecondary Education and Training, DVP-PRAXIS, for KnowledgeWorks Foundation, August 2005

Analysis in Support of Ohio Bridges to Opportunity Program, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, Knowledge Works Foundation, October 2005

Ohio Job Outlook to 2012, Labor Market Information Service, ODJFS, State of Ohio

“Keeping America’s Promise”, Education Commission of the States and League for Innovation in the Community College, 2005

Learning for Life: A Fair Start for Every Ohio Child

Children are born learning. The miracle of brain research has shown us that roughly 85% of a child's brain is developed by age 5. Yet, currently, less than 1.5% of Ohio's investment in children occurs by that time. The earliest years offer a tremendous opportunity for building a lifetime of positive outcomes. We can and should support Ohio's parents in making smart choices that help each child have the best possible start in life.

Investment in high quality early care and learning will help us simultaneously improve Ohio's social, education, and economic outcomes.

Far too many Ohio children are falling behind at the start of their academic journeys. This achievement gap has roots that begin long before a child enters the schoolhouse door. Participation in high quality early learning programs is a demonstrated method for boosting school readiness for vulnerable children. We must make such opportunities available to all Ohio's children, particularly those at risk of failure.

High quality early care and learning is not just smart social and education policy, it is smart economic development policy. A growing number of economists – including Nobel laureate James Heckman – note that investment in high quality early care and education outperforms other economic development strategies. Such programs are shown to reduce rates of crime and teen pregnancy; increase rates of college attendance; create savings in education through fewer grade repetitions and lower special education costs; result in higher tax revenues and rates of home ownership; and lower health and welfare expenditures.

Research breakthroughs of the past several years show that we know how to help a child enter school ready to learn. We know how to intervene effectively to help children with behavioral challenges inhibiting their ability to fully develop. We know how to start closing the achievement gap. We know how to invest the state's scarce resources to maximize economic return to taxpayers. But for too long, we've simply lacked the leadership needed to make it happen.

In order to give every Ohio child a fair start in life, reduce the school "achievement gap," and promote the most efficient economic development strategy available, as governor, Ted Strickland will:

Work to make high-quality early care and learning for all children a reality in Ohio – a reality that offers good choices for our parents.

Pursue the goal of making sure all Ohio children have access to early care and learning by:

Using unspent TANF funds, the federal Child Care Development Block Grant, and if necessary, reordering our state government priorities to allow us to invest an additional \$50 million per year in the first two years of the administration in quality early care and

education for Ohio's 3 and 4-year-olds. For every dollar invested in high quality early care and education, taxpayers can expect a rate of return to taxpayers of at least \$1.62. (Some experts say that the rate of return is seven dollars for every dollar invested).

Providing gubernatorial leadership to marshal the energy, investments and ideas of the dozens of corporations, foundations, individuals and non-profit organizations in Ohio already focused on improving the quality of our children's early care and learning experiences.

Accelerating statewide implementation of Step Up To Quality, Ohio's consumer early care rating system and early childhood teacher professional development initiative, to ensure that Ohio has a system that will make the best use of our investment and provide true high-quality care choices to Ohio's families. Move to a statewide program by investing an additional \$20 million in the first biennium through the use of the same funds specified above. Currently, the program is in five urban counties (Hamilton, Franklin, Cuyahoga, Stark and Lucas) and one three-county rural area (Athens, Hocking, Perry).

As governor, Ted Strickland would encourage all-day kindergarten, possibly by pursuing incentives through the state basic aid formula that encourages local school districts to expand its availability. (Nationally, 28 states provide these incentives including many in our region – Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin.)

Recognize the critical importance of a child's social, emotional and physical development to school readiness and lifelong learning.

Increase availability of voluntary screening and treatment of physical and behavioral health problems in young children ages birth-6 through the use of S-CHIP, EPSDT, Help Me Grow and Children's Trust Fund Dollars. (A total of \$15 million in the first biennium, approximately \$4 million of which may be General Revenue Funds.)

Realign state government to promote healthy early childhood development.

Establish an Early Childhood Cabinet that sets and coordinates state policy and programs serving Ohio children ages prenatal to 6. Unite key state agencies around a common goal of promoting school readiness. (Minimal or no fiscal impact).

Sources:

Committee for Economic Development

National Institute for Early Education Research

Pre-K Now

Cleveland Federal Reserve Bank