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OHIO COMMUNITY COLLEGES PRAISE GOVERNOR DEWINE'S EXECUTIVE BUDGET

COLUMBUS – The Ohio Association of Community Colleges (OACC) voiced appreciation for Governor Mike DeWine's biennial state budget proposal, praising its strategic investments in education and workforce development.

"At a time when Ohio's economy is diversifying to compete in the modern economy, providing the skilled workers our employers require in order to thrive requires a strong commitment to strengthening Ohio's higher education system," said Jack Hershey, president and CEO of the OACC. "Governor DeWine and Lt. Governor Husted understand this need, and their budget proposal takes important steps toward helping ensure that more Ohioans can take part in the "knowledge economy" this budget is building."

Hershey said noteworthy steps in the governor's proposed budget include creation of a new \$1,000 grants to help support students pursuing a credential or degree at one of Ohio's 23 community colleges, increases in the State Share of Instruction, financial aid to help more Ohioans pursue short-term certificates and funding to provide wrap-around services and academic supports to improve student success.

"Our community colleges understand the vital contribution we make to Ohio's growing economy," said Hershey. "The governor's budget priorities are an important part of that effort, reflecting the changing economic landscape in Ohio, where employers are increasingly turning to our colleges to prepare their future workers."

"As with every budget, we know this is just the beginning of a long process," Hershey said. "We look forward to working with the Administration and General Assembly to identify how best these new investments can support Ohioans pursuing a postsecondary pathway that best suits their needs – whether it be a short-term, workforce-readiness credential, apprenticeship, or traditional bachelor's degree – and prepares them with the skills that the state's employers are prioritizing."

About OACC

The OACC represents the presidents and trustees of the state's 23 public two-year institutions, working to advance community colleges through policy advocacy and professional development. For more information, please visit www.OhioCommunityColleges.Org.

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