

State Senate Passes Bill to Place Ohio Third Frontier Bond Issue on May Ballot

The Ohio Senate voted this week in favor of a bond issue on May's ballot to extend the life of the Ohio Third Frontier. The Ohio Third Frontier is the \$1.6 billion, 10-year initiative passed in 2002 to support the creation of high-paying, high-tech jobs within the state. The program is set to expire in 2011 unless it is extended. The program has been credited with creating 41,300 jobs through December 2008 and generating \$6.6 billion in economic activity within the state. Additionally research indicates that the program leveraged state investments tenfold – meaning for every dollar of state money invested, there was a direct return of \$10.

The Senate joins the House of Representatives in its bipartisan support of the extension of the Ohio Third Frontier. Where the two chambers differ is in their recommended level of renewal. The House bill proposes a \$950 million renewal of the program, while the Senate version calls for \$500 million. The House declined to accept the Senate's changes and the Resolution is now in a House Senate Conference Committee to resolve differences. An acceptable compromise between the two versions must be passed by both chambers before it can be presented to the secretary of state's office no later than Feb 3.

"We urge our state legislators to support the renewal of the Ohio Third Frontier at as robust a level as possible," says Ted Ford, president and CEO of TechColumbus. "The Third Frontier has been a real game-changer for Ohio as a whole and Central Ohio in particular. It has accelerated the transformation of the Ohio economy by turning our research and technology strengths into new companies, products, and high wage jobs. It is also paying for itself through new tax revenues. We must build on our momentum."

Platform Lab - an Ohio resource for 8 years

Platform Lab – an IT test lab founded by TechColumbus & Ohio Supercomputer Center and funded by the Ohio Third Frontier – celebrates its 8th anniversary on February 1st.

Platform Lab opened its doors for IT testing and training in 2002 and has been utilized by 240+ firms for thousands of IT tests, classes and seminars.

In 2005, Platform Lab received funding from the Ohio Third Frontier to establish branch locations statewide, providing facilities for Ohio firms to conduct application load/stress testing, cloud computing projects, proof-of-concept validation, IT training classes and disaster recovery evaluations. This funding also allowed Platform Lab to drive over \$500,000 in business from out of state into Ohio.

Platform Lab has been one of the most successful IT grant recipients of the Ohio Third Frontier, tripling the expected revenue generation, creating 11 jobs and driving 71 IT consulting sales opportunities to Ohio-located IT consulting firms.

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