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Committees:

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Sunset Review

BRIGID KELLY

State Representative

Chairwoman Manning, Vice Chairman Dean, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity for Representative Skindell and I to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 216. This bill would protect Ohio's workers and ensure fair treatment of employees in the workplace.

Many Ohioans working in retail jobs must work multiple jobs, usually each of them part-time, in an effort to earn a living. They need reliable schedules in order to juggle their employment and life outside of work. Many retail and food service employers use "just in-time" scheduling practices that do not give employees much notice as to when they will be working; this scheduling technique is inconvenient and does not treat workers the respect they deserve.

An economy that works for all includes improvements for scheduling to bring back stability. This bill requires employers to post their employee's schedules at least 14 days in advance. If any changes are made to the schedule after these 14 days, employees will receive compensation of up to four hours of the employee's normal hourly wage. In addition, employees who are "on-call" but have their shifts canceled are entitled to two to four hours of pay at their regular rate.

In addition to predictable scheduling, this bill requires a successor employer to retain certain employees during a transition period after an ownership transfer. Therefore, for example, if one grocery store chain purchases another, it cannot unilaterally and immediately replace all of the original employees.

According to the Economic Policy Institute, by income level, the lowest income workers face the most irregular work schedules leaving about 17% of the workforce with unstable work shift schedules. Employees who work irregular shift times, compared to those with more standard shift times, experience greater work-family conflict and greater work stress and being part time more than doubles the likelihood of having hours that vary weekly.

Workers in Ohio should be treated fairly, and with dignity. I appreciate the chance to offer testimony on House Bill 216 and would be happy to answer any questions.

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