



House Health Committee
Rep. Derek Merrin, Chairman

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Date: 5/28/19

Name: James Wynn II

Are you representing: Yourself _____ Organization

Organization (If Applicable): BREAD

Position/Title: _____

Address: 2889 Kool Air Way

City: Columbus State: OH Zip: 43231

Best Contact Telephone: 6142168623 Email: jaw2dub@yahoo.com

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes _____ No _____

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): House Bill 14

Specific Issue: Kinship Care

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent _____ Interested Party _____

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes _____ No _____

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 3 minutes

Comments:

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.

In the Spring of 2015, We had a member of our congregation at the Church of Christ on Genessee ave who had temporary custody of her 6 month old niece. Kaia's mother had lost custody due to Children services deeming her unfit at the time due to a number of circumstances, but she was working to regain custody. During the Spring Our Church member was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer and was not long able to care for her. At Church my wife had bonded with Kia and Pam asked if we would interested in caring for her until her cancer treatments allowed her more time. There were no other family members on either side ^{of the family} in a position to take custody. Our youngest child was 30 years old, so it had been a while since we had a new born in our care.

We applied to gain ^{temporary} custody and were enrolled in the Kinship care program. We qualified and gained temporary custody of Kia July of 2015, when she was 8 months old. We were both still working, my wife was on Summer break, from Dublin City Schools.

We worked with the social worker and she was able to secure a car seat and stroller for us to transport her. Our income would not allow us to qualify for assistance from any of the government programs. We did have a medial card for her that we could use at Children's Hospital. We were also given a WIC card that we could use to purchase some of her food needs, but not all.

We were also told that the child's mother would be claiming her as a dependent even though she did not have custody, because this was the 3rd child she had lost custody of and it had been her practice, so we did not claim her on our taxes.

As my wife was heading back to work, we need^{ed} child care for Kia, we found out quickly that it was very expensive. \$225.00 per week / \$900 a month , which we could not afford. We did consider backing out of

the program at that time. We were fortunate that a friend of my daughter owned a daycare and would give us a discount, we were billed \$125.00 per week, which was still expensive as we were trying to gear up for retirement. I believe Children Services paid for two weeks of Daycare as we appealed to them for help.

There were no other programs we qualified for and no other assistance was given to us. We could have used some help with food, diapers, clothing, shoes and Daycare. This experience definitely put a squeeze on our finances.

We provided care for a 9 month period (3/16). The child's mother was able to secure custody after completing the requirements that Children's services requested.

We were blessed to be able to provide the time and resources it took. But knowing the financial requirements that it takes we have not continued our relationship with the Kinship Care program even though they has asked us.

If there was assistance available, that would certainly have an effect on our decision in the future.